The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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CHRISTMAS: 1936

THERE recently appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* a highly remarkable editorial article entitled, "The Mystery That Is Man." Commenting upon the abdication of King Edward, the writer remarked that during the weeks when that extraordinary event was running its exciting course, nearly all the other great problems of our age "were all alike pushed into the background of readers' minds and of newspapers while two human beings and an empire fought it out for mastery." In discussing the outcome, the *Herald Tribune* probed far beneath the surface of the affair, and, in doing so, we believe, it not only gave its readers a very thoughtful, and thought-provoking, essay on a particular news event, but also proved that even daily journalism is awakening to the need of trying to find and to express deeper and more fundamental views concerning what is happening in the world today than it has hitherto sought to deal with.

The lesson that our brilliant contemporary draws from its consideration of the British crisis is of great interest. As it expresses the matter, during the course of that crisis, "one day it seemed as if the stability and conservativeness of the British Empire was the one hope of Europe. The next it seemed as if the love affair between an English monarch and an American-born woman was the controlling factor that might make or break western civilization. The truth must plainly lie between these extremes. . . . It is that the economists and the mechanistic interpreters of history, along with the believers in a pure democracy, have not the whole story. Much of the first importance lies wholly outside their philosophies."

Indeed it does. And it seems to us that what lies outside the various philosophies which today struggle for ascendance over mankind, in the economic, the political and the social arenas of the world, is that truth which the scattered and weak-

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ened remnants of the Christian peoples alone possess, but which has been denied and rebelled against by the false philosophers, and the false leaders of the nations—the truth which Christmas speaks again, as it has spoken since that day in Bethlehem when God became man in Jesus Christ, and fully and finally revealed the ultimate law of human life.

As much as any daily newspaper—perhaps, indeed, even more—a journal like this, which accepts the truth of Christianity, and seeks as best it can to apply the criterion of Christian truth in dealing with the news and the affairs of human life, finds it to be a very difficult task to probe beneath the agitated surface of events to find and to express the underlying causes, the really determining factors, of such events. We do not desire to preach—nor have we any commission to do so; nor do our readers care for any such thing. Yet, as our neighbor, the *Herald Tribune,* discovered when it faced the task of analyzing the welter of forces and factors involved in the recent British crisis, any writer honestly striving to understand what is happening in the world must go behind the exterior aspects to the inner springs of all actions. Our secular contemporary, in doing so, found itself contemplating "the mystery that is man." It asked itself, "What have been the controlling factors in modern Europe?" It enumerated the bitter economic contests, and the struggles of institutions, and the power of great egoists, from Napoleon and Bismarck to the living dictators, and the tremendous effects of various types of loyalties—loyalty to "that mystical entity, the empire, which no man has seen but before which all Britons bow," and loyalty to various nations, and loyalty to individuals, "that final mystery of all human action. . . . The sum of such events is man. Let who will define him!"

And secular journalism does well indeed by discovering man, the mystery, behind all the mechanistic, blind forces that have been lifted up above man and his human interests. It will do still better if it goes on to discover God, the Creator, the Father, the Sustainer, of man. Christian journalism, at any rate, must never forget that final fact. And at Christmas it may well put aside all the accumulated atmosphere of the secular world, in which it, too, like all human things, is immersed, and proclaim its faith that the birth of Jesus Christ was the coming of Almighty God into the world, as Man, and that it was the central event of all human history, and that the God-Man did not leave His children after His coming, but remained with us, and is with us now, and will be with us till the end of the world, and beyond the world for ever. For Christ is in His Church.

Oh, yes, it is true that over great spaces of the earth the Church of Christ has not yet extended the truth of Christ. It is another and a far more bitter truth that over other great spaces of the earth, where the Church of Christ once taught the truth, there has been and is now apostasy, and rebellion, and persecution. But what Christian does not know that all these things were foretold? What Christian does not know that in spite of all such failures and defeats, the final victory of Christ and His Church is assured? And not only in what is called a "spiritual" sense—but truly also in a temporal and secular sense of the words—must Christianity prevail. For being the ultimate, the unchangeable truth, Christianity alone can supply the foundation, the direction, the life-giving atmosphere of human society. All philosophies denying Christianity must necessarily fail, dragging down the social and political systems derived from them. But Christianity never completely fails. Any collapse suffered by a particular Christian society, or nation, or class, is never complete and final. Christianity alone of all forces in the world possesses the secret of resurrection; it partakes of the everlasting energy of the Being of God, from which it comes, and by which it is sustained.

Christmas of 1936 means a renewal of Hope, a fresh welling forth of Faith, a new flooding of Love throughout all the world. Christ is with His people. "He comes to us Whose wondrous birth renewed (and ever renews) the youth of mankind."

Week by Week

PARTLY incidental to Christmas were bonuses and "wage dividends" on a scale reminiscent of boom times. Only a very dour pessimist will deny that there has been a trend to greater and more remunerative business activity, and that a decidedly better feeling about the future is developing rapidly. All of us may, therefore, view the current generosity of so many employers as a manifesto of hope and confidence. Even so one cannot altogether neglect a number of indications that all is not yet rosy. Current disbursements are to some extent unquestionably the result of a desire to avoid further legislation and taxes. They reflect shrewd thinking about the price to be paid for industrial peace. Whether or not the masses of the people are as yet ready to strike a relatively permanent bargain is another matter, not to be determined easily. Unemployment is still far too rampant. The length of the catalogues of families on relief is still too impressive. All that can be learned of popular moods in various important urban centers supports even now the contention that the fundamental issues are still very much under discussion. But certainly a great deal of progress has been

The Trend of Events

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made since the dark days of five years ago. One may safely believe that, unless a major international catastrophe descends, two years more will produce a substantially different situation. Just now carefulness is demanded; and carefulness implies, more than anything else perhaps, a realistic and open-minded awareness of how the great laboring majority is shouldering the burden. It may well be that political skill faces the supreme test.

Long Live the King!

WE HAVE not been privileged to draw from the sources of information which beyond any question really determined the policy of the British government during the Edwardian crisis. But that there was plenty of such information is evident from the fact that opposition to Mr. Baldwin did not materialize in quarters where it had undoubtedly been expected to appear. The Labour party not only refused to rally to the support of a "democratic sovereign" who was obviously trying to strike a bargain, but it even helped to carry on the conspiracy of silence which for ten days had most of the world on tenterhooks. This fact is of extraordinary significance from several points of view. First, it is as clear as anything could be that the conservatives would have preferred almost every difficulty to the task of bringing about the abdication of a monarch upon whose popularity and regality much time and effort had been expended. Even the liberal ministers of the past century would have confronted such a job in blank dismay. Secondly, it is equally evident that King Edward was bereft of every chance to make a fight of it. That he wanted to do so, and that to the best of his ability he tried, can be deduced from the delay and the secrecy itself. Third, in the end only Winston Churchill was left out on a limb, and he was there simply because it is a spot he seeks out by a kind of natural instinct.

HOW IS one to diagnose so extraordinary a situation? To regard the whole business as a love affair which could not end in matrimony by reason of the opposition of the Anglican Church is, we believe, to make oneself out to be more credulous than necessary. Certainly the divorces of Mrs. Simpson played a part, in that widespread antipathy to that kind of queen spared the government the hard work of coming out in the open with what it had on its mind. This, however, has been hinted at in one or the other newspaper dispatch as being fear of the kind of program for which Edward was gradually coming to stand. He had indicated some friendship for dictatorial systems, and some anger with parliamentary methods. A fondness for the society frequented and to a certain extent organized by the Nazi Ambassador was attributed to him during some months past. One finds unthinkable, however, a rumor which more recently has made the rounds—that Mrs. Simpson was, unwittingly or otherwise, a Ribbentrop agent. This would explain what has happened by a factor so wildly fantastic that it would make an already lurid romance something even more baroque than Dumas. It is merely evident that there was a trump card in Mr. Baldwin's pack. The adventure of finding out what it was may be left to historians of the future. Meanwhile the present may dispatch a look of sympathetic regret toward a lonely and fascinating young man, now somewhere in Austria. After all, he had a way with him.

Pax and Peace

THE COMMONWEAL has recently run notices about Pax Romana, an international organization of Catholic student societies, and — confusingly enough — about Pax, "a Catholic organization of conscientious objectors." We don't believe Pax Romana will meet with anything but encouragement, and we have already had letters taking up the idea with enthusiasm. Pax is a different matter. Taken at its face value, it is a radical idea. As proposed by its American sponsor, the *Catholic Worker*, it is "an organization of Catholics who, while they cannot join any of the existing pacifist groups, nevertheless feel that they cannot, in conscience, take any part in a modern war." This is just about pure pacifism, allowing only that theoretically, under some—and other—circumstances, there might conceivably be a just war. With the number of Catholic fire-eaters who occasionally give speeches around the country, a group holding these views isn't likely to receive universal support from their coreligionists. The *Catholic Worker* points out: "When the next war comes along, and it will, Catholic conscientious objectors will have no standing with or recognition by the authorities unless they act now to build up, in the public mind, a recognition of the fact that Catholics *may* be conscientious objectors and do not have to place themselves at the beck and call of whatever group of politicians happens to have control of affairs at the time." That *may* is a rather difficult word. Meeting attacks in the communications columns of the *Catholic Herald* of London, the English leaders, and original organizers, of Pax seem to have given away practically every pacifistic principle and made the English branch no longer a very serious opponent of war violence. In this country we hope Pax will remain firm in principle, and will succeed in encouraging and organizing real conscientious objectors, who mean actually to refuse to fight in the next war, however speciously it will, at the time, be advertised to them.

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THERE will be three Masses on Christmas morning everywhere in a troubled world. We cannot think too long or deeply about the liturgical significance of the feast, which commemorates the Saviour's birth with especial emphasis upon His ultimate sacrifice. But it was not remembrance alone He desired of us, but preaching. In so far as that is concerned all who profess His name are, whether they will or not, dedicated oracles. They may be silent in so far as words are concerned. Ascetic monks buried deep in their cloisters preach for His sake out of the mystery of stillness; and so do very humble, very poor people, too modest for any vehicle of expression save their daily lives, or sinners who do not know that they repeat the parable of the Publican. But what at Christmas should be the tidings that come from them, and from all the rest of us who have speech and action as well as the duty of speaking and acting? Surely "peace on earth to men of good-will." But peace the world cannot give. This peace is the manifestation of selflessness. It is the reward for giving away, and can be nothing else. A war need not be international in scope, or fought with tanks and fleets of bombing planes. It can be fought in a room—indeed, the worst of battles is invariably fought there. The act of taking from someone by aggrandizement is always and everywhere the end of peace. Christians must preach this—it is their Christmas function. And they give not merely tangible things but sympathy, understanding, love, forgiveness. Imagine what earth would be like if orthodox Christians, just they alone, said these things and meant them on one morning of the year.

The Uses of Christmas

A PITTSBURGH judge has just forced seventy-seven men serving sentences in that city for the offense of drunken driving to attend the funeral of the victim of one such offender, and to listen while he preached a sermon over the lifeless body. The fact that the grisly and the theatrical are combined in this attempt to meet a great evil need not prevent its being more effective than more seemingly decorous procedures. There is a time, perhaps, for macabre dramatizations—a time for using an electric shock to bring home to the careless or stupefied conscience what may be the results of a habit of half-wittedly gambling on the safety of other human beings. Certainly, the type of person who can deliberately overindulge in drink before driving a car is the type immune to ordinary reason and ordinary appeals in the name of the basic rights of others. The figures on motor mortality are everywhere. The warnings are everywhere. The calamities brought about by careless driving of all sorts, especially the sort caused by intoxication, are known in every city, town and countryside. The mind not reached by this accumulated appeal is a peculiar mind, weirdly apart in spite of its apparent normality, from the common imagination of its fellows. Weird measures may be needed to bring it to a perception of the actuality of the world around it, the actuality of tragedy, the actuality above all of the results of its own deeds. The educational effect of this strange episode, it is to be hoped, will spread far beyond the seventy-seven to the many seventies times seven of others who need it also.

Against Drunken Driving

FROM the Holy See there has come a message of great importance, addressed to the episcopate of the United States, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the work of the Commission for the Catholic Missions among the Colored People and the Indians. The Sacred Consistorial Congregation warmly praises its work, and enumerates many of its notable achievements, but the keynote of its message may be said to be the urgent plea made for the intensification of the apostolate, and its extension among the clergy, and the religious institutes, and the laity. The fact that after half a century, the letter says, out of 12,000,000 Negroes there are only about 250,000 Catholics, and that "now more than ever they are exposed to the dangers of unbelief and to pernicious activities of every sort," is strongly stressed. There is the most pressing need for white Catholics to take the condition of the Negroes to heart. It is with the full approval of the Holy Father, "who watches with paternal solicitude the apostolate so zealously conducted for the benefit of this people," that the Sacred Consistorial Congregation makes its "pressing recommendation." An immediate and wide increase of missions for the Negroes is given the first place among the missions urged by the Congregation, for this will lead directly to the providing of "a greater number of churches and chapels, of apostles, of schools." Next comes the provision of a larger number of priests to undertake the service that is required. And more and more, declares the Holy See, through the Congregation, it is necessary to cultivate ecclesiastical vocations, "with particular care and effort," among the Negroes themselves. "The mind of the Holy Father in reference to favoring these vocations is clearly expressed in the letter directed to the Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word, April 5, 1923." Those who realize the splendid religious character of the American Negroes, and realize also the gross injustice which lies so heavily on the race, will welcome, and pay heed, to this call to extend the Faith among them.

Negroes and the Faith

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SOME TRENDS IN CRITICISM

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

Solidarity among Catholics will not be obtained merely through legislation stipulating that it ought to exist. It must repose upon a fundament of inner conviction, and of readiness to share creatively in the formation of ideas. Some obstacles to such a state of mind are examined by Mr. Sands in the following paper. He insists that blanket slogans both unfair and dangerous are in circulation. We believe that the matter is important and interesting enough to merit serious discussion.—The Editors.

THE LAETARE MEDAL awarded this year by the University of Notre Dame to Mr. Richard Reid of Georgia was given for public services performed "on the logical assumption that a more understanding spirit between Catholics and non-Catholics . . . should mean a more united front against the enemies of both. . . ." That is a very important recognition of realities. To judge from certain trends of criticism it is a recognition of realities which seem to be less clearly understood by some Catholics in parts of the Eastern and Middle Atlantic States than they are in Georgia and Indiana.

Two forms of criticism of Catholics by Catholics are particularly noticeable because they are so constant and they are important because they really seem to express the opinion of weighty personalities as well as a considerable section of readers of our periodical publications. Certain writers and certain magazines are admittedly very disturbing to these critics and readers "because they concede too much to Protestants." That is a point of view to which I shall return presently. It should be made clearer by those who advocate it.

The other constant and much more important criticism is a rather devastating thing. It is very hard to deal with. It should be discussed first, for it goes further than disagreement with an author's writing. It is not applied to matters of faith and morals; of definition or of dogma. It does not take the trouble to disagree or debate. It simply condemns. It covers everything the victim does, says or even thinks. In its effects it overwhelms and smothers him with a blanket charge of spiritual shortcomings, all of them attributed by the critic to "intellectual pride." That sort of charge has become a stereotyped way among certain groups to dispose of any personal and positive conviction which differs from general opinion.

Its apparent finality leaves any responsible Christian flat and defenseless. It is impossible for him to disagree with such an accusation; for, as a responsible Christian, he is perfectly conscious that it might easily be true.

Nevertheless, the thing is an abuse. It could be said, and in general is said, about anyone who holds stubbornly to a conviction born from his own experience. It is generally said about him by people who have not had the same experience, and who do not, therefore, see why he should hold an opinion out of the common. It might be said in the confessional by a judicious spiritual adviser, weighing his words; or it might be said there humbly by the stubborn man himself, conscious of his own spiritual deficiencies. Outside of that, it is not in its proper place.

It ought not to be used as it so commonly is in criticism of a man's personal acts, writing or opinions. It is unfair criticism. It borders on being an un-Christian thing for Christians to allege against each other; and it is a positively dangerous thing to throw about so generally and so loosely.

The first effect of that kind of irresponsible accusation is to put off a cautious man from expressing any conviction publicly; or what is worse, from acting on his convictions. When used about a man's opinion on matters concerning religion, it tends to reproduce the state of mind we see in several Catholic countries today. In several of those countries (through fear of men connected with the inquisitional tribunal) Catholics became so wary of discussing anything connected with religion that a great many ended in indifference and eventually in hostility to religion.

It is, in general, a particularly dangerous trend in criticism at this moment of our history, when our institutions are at stake and Americans most need free and convinced discussion. It is dangerous in particular when it tends to silence those Catholics who have firm convictions. At this time of all times in the history of the Church, it is essential for the purging and preservation of civilization to assert and maintain boldly and stubbornly, in every possible way, the Catholic meaning of "person" and "individual."

Fortunately, this kind of criticism is, as yet, almost a local phenomenon. It should not be allowed to grow. It can still be checked. It is not spread all over the United States. It does not exist in countries where Catholics take their true place in the intellectual world. It is not a thing, for instance, that Catholics commonly say to each other in the principal countries of Europe. It is quite permissible in Europe, for Catholics to have

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definite, hard and bold opinions. It is quite usual for them (as it used to be with us) to have convictions and to state them, and even to uphold them to their personal cost, if it happens to be necessary.

It is generally conceded among such people that a man is the sole judge of when it is necessary for him to fight for his convictions or to take a personal loss because of them. It would seem very curious indeed to an intelligent European that any fellow Catholic should classify him as a "crank" or as an "unsuccessful man" or as actuated by "intellectual pride" because he stands stubbornly to a definite conviction in matters of public import regardless of consequences to himself.

It is an unwholesome symptom among us that this sort of classification is beginning to be noticeable. It is unwholesome for Americans to accept at all, as axiomatic, that in politics, in business, even in the educational world, a man must be "regular"; that any departure from strict regularity is an eccentricity. It is disturbing enough that Americans in general should be showing a tendency to go that way in this generation. That Catholics should be drifting along with such a current is simply appalling, for we have, after all, a definite philosophy.

Catholic philosophy gives a clear meaning to "person" and "individual." The great issue, throughout the world today, is the issue between that conception and the conception of the totalitarian state in all its forms. That kind of state, in all its forms, is incompatible with, and is the complete negation of, all those rights of person and individual over which government has no rights whatever, and never should be allowed to usurp any. That issue is both Catholic and American in its very essence.

It is very natural that both should find themselves on common ground there, because American fundamental institutions are all based upon this Catholic conception.

This clash of ideas is the most important world issue today. There is in consequence nothing in the world to discuss today more important than such subjects as Catholicism, the Church, the degree of influence of Catholics upon a society of which they are (or are not) an integral part, or the conduct of Catholics wherein it may be a hindrance rather than a help to the exercise of the right influence of Catholicism upon society, or Catholic education. These things ought to be discussed. They are the only important things to discuss, for they are fundamental to all the rest. If that kind of discussion is discouraged or barred by such shallow criticism by smug or timid people, all else is idle chatter and brings no solution to basic problems of the world in general or of the American people in particular.

No one who has any vision of these problems would deny that the world is entering a new era of great change, and that whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not, America is drawn into it, inescapably. Whether this world change is one of evolution, or one of decadence and degeneration, is not the point here. The point is: that in either case Catholicism is the only force in the world which can carry right evolution, or stem the tide of degeneration; and that there is no society nor set of political institutions in the world through which the principles of Catholic philosophy and the ethics of Catholic culture could be applied to life more naturally and acceptably than in the United States.

The reason for that, as has been said above, is very simple. No matter how ignorantly and erroneously or cynically, or sordidly, American history may be taught (even by Catholics; even in Catholic schools), there are certain undeniable facts about the way we began life as "American."

It is a fact, susceptible of scientific proof, that Americans began to be a new subdivision of the human race in the first generation born on this continent after the first permanent settlements began in 1607. One potent reason of our present confusion in regard to many things is that the continuity of that evolution was cut sharply across by an intensive period of mass immigration.

It is a fact which surely should not need restatement of proof to educated men, that institutional Protestantism was a new thing in the sixteenth century. It was not set and formed in the early years of the next century when our continental American communities were born, which turned into the United States in the course of the next three hundred years. It is a fact in direct consequence to this, that newly Protestant founders of these American communities brought into the evolution an eventual crystallization of what we call "American" ideas and institutions, a surprisingly large residual content of that Catholic mode of thought which had produced what we call "the Catholic mind" during all the centuries previous to the split of Christianity.

Those newly Protestant men could not and did not change the very roots of their being overnight, nor by crossing the Atlantic. They were transplanting here for growth and evolution the things they most cherished, the things they held to most strongly. It would be difficult to point out a single one of these cherished things which was not formed, aspired to as an ideal and fought for in Catholic England, against a background of United Christendom, centuries before there was a Protestant in existence. It is characteristic of those times, and of those men in America that even when they seemed to be most "Protestant" the essential things that they were doing (in

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distinction to surface manifestations) were Catholic, formed and settled according to Catholic principles, in the Catholic mind of their blood-ancestors.

American Catholics today do no service to Catholicism nor to America by ignoring these things; or by denying American tradition; or by discarding it for something else; or by confusing true and present issues by insistence on obsolete or non-existent issues. There, at that point, we return to the feeling of a good many people that certain Catholics "concede too much to Protestants."

Protestantism today is an obsolete issue, as far as we are concerned. Its general discussion is useful only in explanation of the genesis of present-day true and living issues. It is not Protestantism that threatens the Catholic position now, though it was on November 28, 1518, when Martin Luther appealed from the Pope to a General Council, and on December 13, 1545, when the Council of Trent convened to meet the problems Luther raised. At that time the issue was one of stopping Catholics from being drawn into the movement which resulted in institutional Protestantism, whether consciously or unconsciously, or by force of circumstances which they could not control. For centuries after the effectual shattering of Christendom, between 1545 and 1648, Catholic teaching, laid down by the Council of Trent, was very largely concerned with resistance to a dangerous Protestant attack, with emphasis on the doctrines attacked or new counter-doctrines advanced, and on the formation of a protective, definitely "anti-Protestant" mind among Catholics.

Surely it cannot be maintained, however, that Protestant doctrine is a menace to Catholicism today in America. If any serious person has any such idea, it would be very interesting to learn from him exactly what Protestant doctrine is today in America, and wherein its threat lies. The signs are all in the other direction. Unbelief is a present danger to Catholic youth in America; not Protestantism. That fight would seem to be over; and several things can be properly conceded to all Protestants.

In the words of an old colored Baptist preacher, who is a friend of the writer of these comments, it can be conceded in general that: "It certainly was a mistake for so many good people to leave the Father's house just because there were some skunks loose in it."

It can also be conceded that in discussing Protestantism or any other thing or idea with which one disagrees whole-heartedly, a reasonable degree of Christian civility is more desirable than vituperation, and particularly if the thing or idea is not a danger or a menace to our own beliefs. And it may be remarked here, in passing, that one of the reasons given for Richard Reid's award was the "temperate" presentation of his and his Catholic colleagues' views, and the avoidance of "raucousness."

It may be conceded, moreover, about most people who write and speak about these matters, that they have no right to question the good faith of any individual Protestant. If it is correct to understand enlightening grace as a free gift of God, it may be properly conceded that it is God's and not any unauthorized individual's business, why He has not given to some particular Protestant grace to see what Catholics see: one, true, universal and infallible Church. It may also be conceded that there is a difference between a Catholic seceding from Catholicism and a man born in three centuries of Protestantism.

In this matter of "conceding too much to Protestants" there is a phrase by a famous Jesuit which fits it very aptly (Rickaby's "An Old Man's Jottings"). Although taken from memory the quotation is substantially correct: "Some people say that Error has no rights. Neither, for that matter, has Truth; for both are abstractions. People in error, however, do have rights and chief among these is the right not to be taken to task by those who have no authority over them." That is a good rule of life; it is a fair "concession"; it is equally Catholic and American.

The Star

Why do we doubt the star
Balanced with awesome wing
Over the sleeping Child,
Whose whiteness has no scar?
For twenty centuries now
We have dreamed about this thing—
Of nation moving hand in hand with nation
To kiss that shining brow.

We doubt, for the light is steel
And the wing is an aeroplane
Over the Child, and all
Our children for woe or weal.
What if our wills have won,
For all our brightness of brain,
A fury to pound and pestle nation on nation
And the world's Mother and Son?

But Mary sings to her own:
This winged speed may bind
All hearts from pole to pole
And barriers be unknown.
Like a seamless robe shall flow
All countries of one mind,
Nation shall blend in light and sing with nation—
If men but will it so.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON.

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THE RABBIT AND SANTA CLAUS

By JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI

THE RABBIT had a very odd coat of blue-grey. Thus visibly distinguished, it had no other unusual characteristic. He was a gift from Mother to my nephew, John Junior, who had already seen two pets of the same species succumb to the trials and tribulations of five-year-old mastership. This one was promptly named Ed out of admiration the boy bore our colored chauffeur. John Junior's father made a roomy cage of wood and chicken-mesh, placed squarely on the grassy stretch in the rear of the house, and there the new pet lived.

Ed's life promised to be merely a succession of days and nights, grass and carrots and cabbage. But some weeks after his arrival my sister, Blanche, was watering the flowers on her front lawn and, on glancing up to the terrace of the high school next door, she saw the blue-grey rabbit solemnly watching her. She was relieved that her husband was at home. He took up the pursuit joined by his son and some of the neighborhood children. The rabbit entered thoroughly into the game and, after dodging in and around houses, stores and garages, was only captured after the hunt had been spread over some fourteen or fifteen city blocks. Weary, but triumphant, the hunters returned, only to find that Ed had been in his cage all the time and they had caught another rabbit. In he went with Ed, however, until an investigation could be started on the morrow.

This revealed that the second rabbit, Billy by name, belonged to a family which lived some eight blocks away and he was duly turned over to a woman who came for him. This episode, however, did not end with Billy's restoration. He had conceived in short acquaintance an undying devotion to Ed and for several weeks was a daily visitor for long hours at Blanche's home. She soon discovered that Ed had been misnamed but she failed to convince John Junior that his pet should be called Edwina. Nor did he understand that she deferred buying Billy until after the litter had been born because she had been told that the male rabbit is apt to destroy its young.

Unfortunately Ed's and Billy's offspring never saw the light of day. A roving bird dog one night got at Ed and, despite the screening which separated them, so badly mauled the rabbit that after several days of nursing it became obvious she had to be put out of her misery. Blanche saw this was done when John Junior was away from home and then prepared to face his sorrow. This was even more intense than she had anticipated and she threshed about for some word of comfort.

She hit upon an idea which was brilliantly successful at the time but which had after results on which she had not reckoned. She told her son that Ed had gone "to the rabbit-heaven and he will be busy there making Easter eggs for you." This caused a considerable brightening on the youngster's part and he asked innumerable questions about his pet's new life, the manufacturing materials he (she!) would use and the certainty that he would make Easter eggs only for him. But Blanche had not properly estimated the power of his memory.

One instance came several months later when she, about to depart for marketing, was accosted by John Junior with a request that she bring home a bunch of carrots for him. But why? And for what? To the boy the answer was simple. It seemed he had concluded that there was only grass in the rabbit-heaven and that Ed would get tired of no dietary variety and would certainly appreciate a carrot occasionally. He had decided that parcel post would turn the trick of bridging the distance between earth and rabbit-heaven.

This outcome of Blanche's solacing fiction was much easier solved than the next development which came shortly before Easter. John Junior had become fairly adept at counting. Further he, giving deep thought to the matter, had decided that Ed, busy in his heaven with the manufacture of Easter eggs, ought at the very least, to complete one egg a day. Very well, there had been 171 days since Ed had taken up in his abode in celestial regions and consequently there should be 171 eggs delivered to him on Easter—very probably more, but at least 171.

He got the 171 eggs, dyed real ones plus smaller candy ones, but Blanche concluded that the preservation of the rabbit-heaven fiction was becoming both inconvenient and costly. Added to this had been the difficulty of keeping John Junior from making himself sick with a surfeit of eggs. These, of course, were eventually and safely exhausted but that autumn her story came again to plague her.

John Junior began his schooling and was thrown with older boys including several cousins. The mother of the latter confided to Blanche that they had made the child's first notable step in the search for truth—they did not believe in Santa Claus. They not only disbelieved but had become missioners in the cause of truth and already several other mothers had complained because their children had had some of the joy of Christmas taken from them.

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Circumstances convinced Blanche of the futility of keeping such knowledge from John Junior, but if the fiction of Santa Claus had to be labeled as such for him, she preferred making the revelation herself. And, grimly, she decided, remembering the 171 Easter eggs, that rabbit-heavens and Easter bunnies would go into limbo with Santa Claus. Thus resolved, she called John Junior to her, feeling him a lamb to be sheared, not of fleece but of cherished ideas. She broke the news gently; she explained that Santa Claus and the Easter rabbit each was a myth, that he would still get his toys and his Easter eggs, but it was his parents who provided them.

John Junior met the news largely with silence. It was obvious, however, that he was disappointed in a world wherein there was neither Santa Claus nor egg-laying rabbits. In fact he took the matter of no rabbit-heaven much more to heart than that of the Christmas legend. But several hours later he was merrily playing a deafening game of Indians and Blanche, relieved, put her news-breaking out of mind.

Not for long, however, for the next morning when she was busy at the crucial stage of cake-baking, John Junior came to her with a question: "Mother, what's a smith?" The moment was not an auspicious one for improving his store of knowledge, so he was told she was busy. Later, when she relaxed into less occupied moments, he was back with the same question. Blanche defined smiths; she even added several frills about the village smithy under "the spreading chestnut tree." But this was not what John Junior wanted, and they worked at cross-purposes for some time before Blanche unearthed the fact that he wanted a definition not of "smith" but of "myth." This presented a difficult problem—to explain such an abstract idea to a six-year-old intellect required a little concentrated thought.

"A myth," Blanche said, watching her son closely, "is a beautiful idea which might be true in heaven." And thought: "Right, the first time!"

John Junior reflected for some moments, and then with a martyr's look, which plainly showed that he knew the answer to his next question would be painful but he was brave enough to throw illusion completely out of his life, inquired: "Mother, what else are smiths?"

On her uneasy reply, "Nothing," he meditated again and then announced: "Well, I know one thing that isn't a smith. And that's a dog." Then, continuing triumphantly: "And I know another thing that isn't a smith, and that's a hen. And it's a good thing, too," he concluded with positive relief, "because if a hen was a smith then we wouldn't have any eggs at all."

For several weeks thereafter Blanche could detect a quality of careful examination in her son. It was as if John Junior was bent on leaping out from ambush and flushing "a smith." His failure to find anything remotely resembling one may have been responsible for the determination at which he arrived shortly after Thanksgiving. He approached his mother with a request for writing paper. Asked what he purposed doing with it, he replied that he wanted to write to Santa Claus.

"But there isn't any such thing as Santa Claus," Blanche countered as she suddenly remembered the page of letters from children addressed to him which the local paper was featuring each day.

"I know," said John Junior somewhat impatiently, "but *all* the other boys and girls are writing to him and he might not like it if *I* didn't write him a letter too."

Shaking her head, Blanche got out a sheet of correspondence paper and John Junior very patiently printed out his particular requisition for Christmas. This composition was later severely criticized by the gentleman's then best girl who told all and sundry that John Junior needn't have asked Santa Claus for everything. She did not understand his psychology but it was that of the man who shoots at a target with a shotgun.

John Junior was taking no chance with either Santa Claus or Christmas and was letting no opportunity pass. Blanche discovered this when a week later she was shopping, crowding many things into a short time and further hampered by having John Junior with her. She hurried him across the floor at the far end of which was the toy department but his sharp eyes had seen what she hoped he would not. This was a department store Santa Claus.

"Mother," John Junior said, halting in his tracks, "I want to talk with him."

"But, John Junior, I haven't the time and besides there are so many children there it would take you ages and ages to get to him."

John Junior persisted nevertheless and eventually she acquiesced. He took his place in line and in due course reached the disguised man. A long conversation ensued between the two, Blanche on the sidelines growing more and more impatient. At length the interview was over and John Junior came skipping down the aisle. He planted himself before her, his legs wide apart, his head back-tilted and shaking negatively from side to side, and his mouth screwed up with the intensity of a decision.

"Well," he pronounced with judicial finality, "he doesn't *look* like a smith to *me*."

Blanche surrendered; she silently led the way toward the elevator. Thereafter she never could fathom what was Santa Claus's real status with her son. And John Junior, content with his findings, is not telling.

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WORK TO DO

By JOHN A. LOFTUS

THE DEPRESSION, of recently unpleasant memory, might on many scores be called finished. The encouraging behavior of the stock and bond market, the most recent reports on corporation income, the indices of physical production, the rising parabola of industrial profits, the statistics on payrolls, the 50-percent increase in checking deposits since March of 1933 —all whistle a merry tune. There are lags, of course; and blotches in the idyllic picture. Freight-car loadings hang at about 70 percent of normal (on a 1923-1931 basis). The construction industries operated at a triumphant 37 percent of normal (22 percent of capacity) in 1935, though even this sector is showing improvement in the current year. Our agricultural situation still depends for the most part on such dubious blessings as droughts and floods for its appearance of prosperity. No business index, however ingeniously weighted, can show us to be even within 10 points of the 1928-1929 prosperity-plateau; though, against a less spectacular background, the present outlook is heartening enough.

The weakest point, however, in our economic convalescence is the matter of unemployment. What good is recovery to the indeterminate millions who haven't a job?

How many people are still out of work? Three and a half million, says the New York *Sun*. Five million, says Miss Perkins. Nine million, says the American Federation of Labor. There is another estimate, non-statistical, by the Consumers' Goods Industries Committee, which simply says with charming optimism that employment is nearing the 1929 level — whatever that means. You can even find other estimates, of varying worth, which put the number below 3,000,000 or above 12,000,000. Take your choice. No one really knows. Until an authoritative census is completed, we can only guess. My own initial conjecture would put the figure somewhere between 6,000,000 and 8,000,000.

Over against this first guess a few puzzling factors have to be weighed. During depression, as family savings shrank or as Father lost his job, many married women would seek employment; and by the mere act, sometimes, of unsuccessfully seeking it, they would become enrolled on the statisticians' censuses as "unemployed employables." Similarly, young people coming more or less of age during these lean years, have sought ineffectually for employment which in better years they would have found, thus displacing an elder fringe who in at least many cases would have been able to retire and be supported by a younger generation, but who now have to hunt around for a job whereby to support their jobless offspring. Paradoxically, the fewer jobs there are, the more people there are looking for them. The unemployment candle is being burnt at both ends—with misleading results in the statistical summaries. It is difficult to estimate how much difference this overlapping of figures would finally make; probably, however, not enough to rob the 8,000,000 total estimate of its unpleasant significance.

A second question, to which again nobody knows the answer, is: "How can these millions be reemployed?" Plans for an extensive survey under government auspices are inchoatively under way, but probably two years or so will elapse before the survey is completed. Meanwhile we can hazard suggestions. I purpose to hazard a few in this article. Even rough conjectures can be valuable, because the question is paramount. It is otiose to dissociate recovery from reemployment. Even the most rigidly Old Guard business mentalities are coming to admit the dependence of industry on distributed consumer-demand. There can be no complete and adequate recovery until these unemployed millions are equipped with buying power, until they are given useful and remunerative work to do.

Is there any reasonable hope that when and if our cozy little recovery swings into full stride, these people will be reabsorbed into productive industries? The all-around trend of industrial employment during and before the depression warrants no such expectation; points, in fact, rather definitely to the opposite conclusion. Three things are particularly worthy of notice:

(1) Productive industries as a whole show a clear trend since 1920 to employ fewer and fewer men. The Statistical Abstract of the United States, on the number of gainfully employed, shows, for the period 1920-1930, a striking relative and absolute decline of employment in agriculture and mining, and a relative decline in manufacturing—concomitant with increased production in both sectors.

(2) The level of technical efficiency, both in agriculture and especially in manufacturing, has stepped up emphatically during the same period, and will doubtless continue to rise. Exact appraisal seems impossible. Estimates are found, ranging from the ultra-conservative to the fantastic. We can safely merge these estimates into a very temperate judgment asserting a 75-percent

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increase of man-hour efficiency in the manufacturing industries from 1920 to the present time.

(3) It is even possible that industry can swing a long way up yet, and increase productive output to a marked degree, before any of those now unemployed need be reabsorbed. For one thing, the exact extent of improved plant-efficiency acquired during the depression years cannot be known yet; gains in administrative efficiency have undoubtedly been considerable. What is more significant, the margin between the number of men actually employed and the number needed for present production is wide, due to much part-time employment. How wide is this margin of available productive force within the ranks of those now nominally employed, cannot even be guessed at satisfactorily; but it surely allows for further expansion before an extensive further draft of labor will become necessary. And as a matter of fact, during recent months, indices of production have been moving upward perceptibly faster than indices of employment.

These three factors, then—an entrenched downward trend in the number of gainfully employed in productive industries, a correlative upward trend in productive efficiency per unit of labor, and an indeterminate margin of utilizable labor force within the ranks of those now nominally employed—combined with a relative stability of population and hence of demand, prompt us to be quite dubious about any large-scale reemployment in the productive industries, in either the immediate or remote future.

Those who have begun to be aware of this disconcerting prospect for the future are turning their attention to another field of potential employment—the service industries—and claim that the only lasting remedy for unemployment problems is to be found in the extension of these fields, and in a stimulation of demand for them.

To begin with, the exact extension of the term "service industries" must be more clearly delimited. Colonel Ayres in his "Economics of Recovery" says that the service industries engage 23,000,000 people. Obviously he makes no distinction between service enterprises strictly so called, and distributive enterprises.

Much of what has been said so optimistically about the prospects for expanding service industries really pertains to the distributive enterprises. The hopes are based on past performance. The two most significant increases in employment (1910-1930) have been: total clerical, from 1,635,000 to almost 4,000,000; retail and wholesale trade, 3,500,000 to over 6,000,000. These are both in the distributive field. Does the steady expansion of these occupational groups over the past two decades warrant an assumption that they will continue to expand and will be able to absorb labor displaced from agriculture and manufacturing? I do not know. Nor does anyone else. Everything depends on the future trend of industrial development. Will that trend be toward more centralization? Or will industry be from now on gradually decentralized? There are grounds for suspecting (and hoping) the latter. But the question lies in the realm of prophecy. It is clear that increasing centralization requires ever more complex and elaborate distribution facilities. But will centralization increase?

There is one subdivision of the distributive group which merits a passing word. Those employed in transportation increased numerically from 822,000 to 1,386,000 over the period 1910-1930; but most of the gain came in the first of the two decades, and further gains are unlikely. The Brookings Institution economists estimate that a hypothetical doubling of 1929 railway tonnage could be carried with scarcely appreciable increases in the labor-force. Proposed consolidations might even cut into current employment totals very considerably. Rehabilitation of a senescent railway industry is a complicated issue anyway, and highly problematic. It is more likely that future development of the transportation industry will involve merely a shifting of personnel, with no notable increase in the total number of employed.

In any discussion of service industries, the question of the ultimate real utility of the services to be rendered is more important than many people realize. Reemployment of the idle is not a problem to be tackled (except in extreme emergency) on a basis of paying people to do anything at all. Work must be found that renders a real service or creates a real utility to society, thus entitling the worker to a reward. In a crisis, the government might conceivably employ and pay people to do all manner of impractical and innocuous things—such as the aimless tasks assigned to the first CWA office-staffs—simply in order to provide those people with some measure of effective purchasing power. But this would not be a satisfactory long-time solution of our unemployment problem. Moreover, certain service occupations might expand immensely without causing the rest of the community to feel jubilant. I give you the undertaking business. Less facetiously, take the figures in the Census reports under the heading, "Clergymen, religious and welfare workers." We see a sudden sharp upward deviation after 1920 from the previous line of trend; whereas the statistics for clergymen alone show only a normal trend. Obviously the increase has been in the number of welfare workers; it is not so obvious that this gives cause for unmixed rejoicing. The increase may be due to keener national consciousness of social problems, to a spread of benevolence and devotedness and effective philanthropy; or it may be due simply to a wider prevalence of social dislocation, to a

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growing obtrusive and insistent need for rehabilitation-work among large groups of our people. At least, there is a sufficiently evident fallacy in saying that we can help solve our unemployment problem by putting even more people on jobs in the growing field of welfare work; that particular industry cannot comfortably expand without implying a correlative expansion of other less pleasant features in our national life.

A survey of certain other service trades that have expanded remarkably in recent years, leaves one a little doubtful. The number of restaurant-keepers increased in ten years (1920-1930) from 61,000 to 165,000. But the small restaurant-keeper is proverbially indigent. It is a bad business. Only the economically dislocated go into it, as an emergency stop-gap because it offers a highly illusory prospect of maintenance without excess effort. The same condition prevails in regard to the growing number of taxicab drivers. Both businesses are unprofitable. Both are overcrowded.

Another occupation showing a marked increase of gainfully employed is that comprising technical engineers and electricians. The figures (in thousands) for the last four decennial census reports are: 97, 209, 349, 507. This is, at first blush, hopeful. But it connotes a correlative development of Power Age techniques, with consequent technological displacements in other industries. The magnitude of these displacements more than offsets the growth in the engineering field. Hence expansion of this occupation offers no radiant prospect of permanent large-scale reemployment.

As for domestic and personal service, the increase over two decades (1910-1930) was from 3,805,000 to 5,448,000. If we accept J. P. Morgan's quaint canon of civilized life (the keeping of one maid per family), we may expect further increases here as civilization advances. Or, if infected with Spenglerism, we may anticipate a development in the opposite direction. It seems to me immensely important, in this regard, to bear in mind the distinction between those service employees who are hired directly and given direct compensation by individual or family units, and those who are hired as subsidiary to industries themselves fluctuating or uncertain in status. Domestic and personal servants fall in the first category. Any widespread expansion of their occupational group (no doubt greatly diminished since 1930, as a glance at the "Situations Wanted" columns will show) presupposes a widespread general prosperity and a far broader distribution of income than we have yet achieved. A factory-worker at present wage-scales will not hire a valet. A similar consideration holds true, to a lesser extent, of doctors, dentists, lawyers and other professional people who ask direct compensation for services rendered: there will be no increase of effective demand for their services without an increase of effective purchasing power throughout the nation.

As for these latter professions in particular, we can dismiss the legal group with just a sigh of sympathy for its already deplorably overcrowded status. The medical profession deserves a more careful analysis. The Committee on Costs of Medical Care estimates that to provide full service to the American people we would need 30,000 more physicians and 141,000 more dentists than we had in 1930. Would there be enough effective demand for the services of this legion of health experts to keep them all profitably employed? That obviously depends on the national income and purchasing power. We might, of course, assume a status of low-cost "socialized medicine" such as has been worked out in the Scandinavian countries and (to some extent) in France. But the immediate prospects for such a status eventuating are not as hopeful as one would wish. If the progressive group who composed or supported the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care can overcome the reactionary opposition of the American Medical Association, it is not impossible that we shall some day see a democratized medical profession in this country. In that event, the increased volume of trade would offset the sweeping reduction in rates. (Of course, there is a manifest limit to expansion in the volume of this kind of trade: only a certain number of persons per year will care to have an appendectomy done, no matter how attractively low the price is.)

Such a set-up would be clearly more desirable than the present one, where physicians and surgeons are compelled to charge excessive fees to those who can pay, as compensation for their free services to the impecunious. Also it would entail correlative expansion of miscellaneous hospital employment. Even as things are, the number of hospital attendants has increased considerably, and could be augmented still further even without the inevitable expansion of hospital facilities that is in prospect; but under current conditions these attendants are miserably underpaid for the discharge of their unsavory duties. The nursing profession, ancillary to the medical, might also admit of expansion, under that hypothetical status of reorganized medical activity; but under actual current conditions, it is overexpanded, as any graduate nurse knows, who is grateful for four or five days' employment per month.

Lastly, as for education, the host of potential teachers hoping for placement in the school systems of our large cities, is eloquent evidence of maladjustment. Large-scale alterations in the whole educational complex are in order, after our more immediate and critical problems are handled.

Summarizing our prospects for expanded employment:

Productive Industries: Little hope, if any.

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Distributive Industries: Problematical, except for the railroad group which is definitely on the skids.

Service Industries: (a) Fields such as domestic and personal service where reemployment is dependent on distributed national income, therefore ultimately on reemployment—a nice vicious circle. (b) The fields of professional service are similarly dependent except to the extent that they can be recast and democratized. (c) There are several minor fields where past expansion has been and future expansion would be illusory and undesirable.

Not a very cheerful picture, is it? Does it mean that we shall need a permanent government program of Employment Assurance through public works? Perhaps. The Report of the President's Committee on Economic Security contained suggestions for such a program. They were eliminated from the final draft of the Social Security Bill. They might have been retained. We may need them yet. At least it seems disconcertingly probable that when the smoke of this last depression has cleared completely away, we shall find ourselves with this unemployment muddle as a permanent heritage. We may as well face it frankly. It is likely that for at least many years, if not for good, we shall have in America 2,000,000 or more people for whom, unless we choose to leave our economic structure unhealthy and unbalanced, we shall have to find remunerative work to do.

NATURE AND THE FIRST MOVER

By LINCOLN REIS

SOONER or later the latest philosophy, however novel and fresh it may declare itself, and however free of the past it professes to be, discovers a tradition for itself, and confirms its doctrines in the works of some remote predecessors. Thus, just as the logical positivists see themselves in Leibnitz and even in the medieval logician Ramon Lull, so our contemporary naturalists, with their eschewel of what is not sensibly presented claim Aristotle for their own.

Thus accustomed to begin with the sensible and formulating their problems in terms of it, and observing that Aristotle begins his scientific treatises with sensible identifications, they conclude that their refusal to advance beyond the limits of the perceptible finds its ancient warrant in Aristotle. There is a difference between a soldier fighting and his body rotting in the field, the enemy knows this well enough, and the difference between these opposed states is enough to identify consciousness for us. We know that it has to do with action rather than repose, with exercise more than rest. And we know that we need look for no deeper explanation in some previous antecedent or condition. The hunt for causes is not always a pursuit into times past. It is as true to say that we have bodies because we exercise as to say that we exercise because we have bodies. And it is well to recognize that things are not so much made by their histories as their histories by things. Things possess and preserve their past, their past exists through them, as the house preserves the bricks, its raw material; for past and raw material, both alike, are qualities of some recognizably completed state. It is by no chance that the Bible, the one book which proposes a finished scheme of our being, is largely composed of history and chronicle.

If we were content to remain in the knowledge that the source of a thing is not to be found in its antecedent conditions, and that the factors which exhibit things and mark them off for us are best identified in actions and in workings and in the contexts and regions of these, then all questioning might be at an end. Though, with such an ending we should be hard pressed to discover what might be a distinctly philosophical activity or hunt for causes apart from what the special sciences afford, *since it is these which disclose the special contexts* of our activities. But Aristotle, the first to express this insight as to the character of the special sciences, and the first to suggest a communicable way of expressing their explorations, did not simply rest upon these discoveries. Comfortably enough, and conformable to our own observation, he begins with simple identifications of readily accessible appearances. The artificial thing will never produce a product that resembles itself. Plant a wooden bed in the earth, and if it grows, it will grow into a tree, not another bed. Or he expresses the obvious facts of motion. Rain falls, smoke ascends, birds fly, snakes crawl, the sun moves. The world is compact of perceptible things, of bodies in interaction with one another, each affecting each. This world of changing and changeable things we call nature, and the study of the ways in which change occurs, be it the falling of a stone, or the growth of a tree, or the dissolution of death, we call the study of nature.

If, however, we continue to read on in Aristotle, we are apt to find that his sentences no longer express the observed workings of perceptible things. The treatise of the Physics begins with an identification of perceptible movements. It ends with what is identified as the

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first moving, and, as we may learn from Aristotle's enumeration of its aspects, it is imperceptible, it has neither weight nor bulk; in every way, except that it also is, it is opposed to the things with which we made our start.

It is a temptation to believe that Aristotle's discussion of these later matters is a species of nonsense, or, if we are polite, a reminiscence of Plato, or at least the courtesy of a pupil to his master. But the manner in which Aristotle everywhere introduces the subject, the care with which it is treated, whether this consist in the tone or the sequence of argument, should make us wary of too easy a suspicion. It may be a greater justice to Aristotle if we assume that the ends of his works are to be taken as seriously as their beginnings. It may be, even, that there is no mystery in them, their introduction no miracle, and that their origin is in the observed fact, and not in the malicious intrusion of a discordant Platonism.

If we accept the validity of Aristotle's conclusions relative to motion, it becomes necessary to modify the statement that all the antecedents and conditions of a thing are wholly defined by the knowledge of it as it is observed in its workings. If the things which we see were always the same with themselves or constantly exhibited the same sort of actions, there would be no problem of origin as a previous factor of explanation, or rather of that sort of origin which posits the existence of a thing altogether imperceptible, unlike that of which it is the origin, and no part of it. It is clear, however, that things are not always the same with themselves, nor do all motions always go on in the same way. Some beings vary their form, and not everything exists smoothly or uninterruptedly or always. And if all movable things, all bodies, have the one quality of perceptibility, this quality shows itself in no uniform way. It not only takes different shapes in different things, but it alters and is different in the same individual as well, as the simple spherical shape of the blastosophore is altered into the mixed shape of the embryo. We cannot account for the differences which perceptibility assumes by the fact of perceptibility alone. What we see around us have their motions mixed, or they start and stop. Here a baby is born, there a man dies. A statue is made, a problem is solved. The infant requires its parents for its birth, the dead man an accident or a sickness for his death; the statue a sculptor for its production, and the problem a mathematician for its solution. Every manner of change which we observe around us presents this double aspect, or at least the context of it presents this aspect of producer and produced. Since we originally apply names to the presented aspects of things, it becomes difficult to know just how many names are to be applied. This double aspect originally presents itself as one, it is the changing thing which we are first conscious of, and so we think it well to apply one name to it. But further examination discloses a kind of division, or even an incompatibility, as if we should label buyer and seller by the same name and still hope to preserve the distinction between them by means of that name. Is it really proper to apply the name of one aspect to the other, or to think that the things denoted by the one name are to be denoted by the other? If it is the go of things upon which our attention is fixed, it is found quickly enough that not all things always have this go. Shall we apply the same name, then, to the thing and its go? And are the characters of both to be identified with one another? Or if a thing is totally identified with its go, how comes it to stop? Or if it is identified with its stoppage, how comes it to start?

Now the things which we observe in motion, which have go, by the very fact that we learn of them through observation, are perceptible. They have the sensible qualities of color, warmth, odor, taste, size and the like. Should they cease to go momentarily, or should they perish altogether, these qualities or some of them would still remain or issue forth in other bodies. It would be hazardous to identify the go of perceptible things completely with their perceptible qualities, since what is not going may in some cases have them too. And these very perceptible qualities, as we may easily see in the case of those bodies which issue from the destruction of other bodies, are the products rather than the origins of growth, of the go or of the motions of things. But the going and the not going, the starting and the stopping of things are facts, facts as much and as real as the very perceptible qualities by which things are first identified. If, then, neither of these factors, the going or the not going, can be wholly accounted for in the region or context of perception, we may be compelled to hunt elsewhere than in perception and its immediate context of perceptible objects for the complete story of the moving thing, what we call the field of nature.

If the observation of things, and the notice of their perceptible behavior, makes us recognize the need for non-observable factors, of factors not altogether identifiable with the perceptible quality, nor to be accounted for in terms of it, except, perhaps as something come upon in the course of its investigation, then for these opposed aspects a single name will never do. If the name which expresses the one is nature, then a different name must express the other aspect. And if the study of the first leads to the discovery of the second, and it may be its further exploration, if the former cannot be accounted for by reason of its apprehensible and apprehended factors, then our content with nature or with the study of its workings as they are exhibited to us is not a complete contentment.

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IT IS RAINING OVER HERE

By SEAN O'FAOLAIN

I HAVE always had a small grudge against Dickens. He was a creator of fantastic worlds that were also lovely worlds, and they impressed themselves on the minds of people so irradicably that the true picture is often forgotten. His image of a snowy Christmas, with skating on the ice, and robins twittering on the clotted boughs is one such picture. It is a pretty image but it is not the reality as we most often see it here. It has made us sigh for a snowy Christmas and made us dissatisfied with the falling rain which we more usually get.

Think of the real picture. It is one of the excitements of my memory to see myself, again, eating a Christmas breakfast by the light of the lamp—the sky outside darkened by the lowering clouds, the early church-bell not, as usual, vibrating through the clear air, sending out widening and dying circles of sound that barely hum in the distant ear, but thumping heavily as if the very metal of the bell had absorbed some of the rain and grown heavy of note. Then there comes the dim quietness of the chapel, soothingly dim—not glaring with the harsh reflection of the snow—and the very holly seems to glisten with the rain, and the snowy linens lie more softly under it, and overhead the tip-a-tap on the high roof is a minuet of praise. What fun to watch the little procession of worshipers under their umbrellas that shine like porter-bottles, all like a scurry of beetles, battling against the wind, shaking themselves like dogs, wet of cheek—a picture of discomfort, it is true, but the reality. And it is a picture that promises an indoor Christmas, with the wild-cats pattering on the window-panes as the downpour lashes the house, gurgles in the shoots, splashes on the pavements, raises the river to a flood, washing everything outside clean and cold. You look up, and you hear it, and you rub your hands and you say, "Stay inside, stay inside"—which, to my mind, is the true and proper and only sensible advice for Christmas-time. What good is winter weather if it isn't uncomfortable for those who have to go out?

If we had snow all the winter long like you, I should not mind. Then it *would* be snow—hard, deep, fit for skiing and tobogganing. Not like our deceitful snow that falls for a few hours, makes us a lovely picture, and then begins to go black in the channels, turns into slush, gets into your boots as muddy water, and ends by making one wish it had never come. Where I like snow to be is far away on the tops of the mountains. As I look through my window now I see the peaks, cone-shaped, white-topped, and other lower hills grained and speckled with white, and a pine-wood dark against all. The cone-shaped mountain catches the sun, and at once reminds me of Fujiyama. That is where I like snow—beautiful, but remote. Then send me rain, and I am happy—a black and white Christmas.

All our Irish pictures of Christmas are wet and dripping. The wood in the fire sizzles. The fields outside are so sodden that you feel that a sod of earth could be squeezed in the hand like a sponge. The cat looks with scorn at the silly pup who *will* bring in the damp on his paws at the end of his wiry hairs. The postman, in a dripping cape, sits and sips his drink, as wet inside him as outside him. As usual it is an epic Christmas with him. He never saw the like: more parcels, more letters, the floods in the river are higher than within the memory of man; the flotsam whirled down from the hills has brought wonders never before heard of—dead sheep, a grand piano, a whole house. . . . When he is gone the circle of dribble from his cape is like the vestige of a hero out of a folk-tale. And then, when the floods have retreated, suitably with the retreat of Christmas Day, the banks are strewn with straw and wrack like a beach after storm, more vestigia of wonder: there is a heavenly light in the bits of blue sky between the hairy clouds and the black moor-top: you can see things, far away, see the battle of sun and moisture, the spears of the downpour glistening, the clouds hurling along, the clean, black, sharp shapes of the naked trees swaying in the wind, and if you get the sun between you and the hill and the mist they stand up against a gentle transparency of earth.

There is more light in rain, more variety, more color, more surprise—more relief. Commonplace? It *is* commonplace. But like all common things far more rich for most of us in all that common, familiar things suggest to the remembering mind.

GRANDMOTHER'S CAP

By J. J. MORONEY

A REGULAR weekly observance of Saturday evenings and one which took on especial airs on Christmas Eve, in the long ago, was the rejuvenation of Grandmother's coiffure. For want of capability to give the observance a name more in keeping with its truly poetic character, I must call it in simple words, "ironing Grandmother's cap." Saturday evenings it was a custom of mild holiday suggestiveness. Christmas Eve it was a ritual. Of course on that high date in the old Irish immigrant calendar the cap was newly made.

The joys which are awakened by memories of the venerable faces encased in the old caps are dampened a bit by the wish that they had not gone so entirely and so suddenly into disuse with the passing of the generation which brought them to America. Grandmother's cap was the invariable head-dress of the matrons of her generation. The youth of this time can have no conception of the dignity, the majesty of that simple adornment of the old ladies who to my boyhood were the very figures of dignity and of majesty.

Whether custom, dating from times "lost in the twilight of fable," decreed that the cap should be donned by the Celtic mother at her first experience in maternity or at the appearance of grey hair, one cannot be clear. We know only that in the good old times the cap was not worn in youth and was worn before the children came to maturity. It was the mark of the matron, the middle-aged mother and grandmother.

My own mother never wore it, nor with rare exceptions did any of her generation. This is one more of

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many distinctions marking off the child immigrant, raised in America, from the adult immigrant raised "at home." To an extent, that was due plainly to Yankee environment which knew no such cap. More potent as explaining the passing of the venerable cap was the dead level of prescriptions by modern fashion conforming to the passion for standardization, the submerging of individuality which is a mark of an age devoted above all things to individualism.

There was individuality in those caps. Strange as it may seem to the modern who may judge them not from memory but from pictures, no two were exactly alike. They were rigidly uniform in two items: they were immaculately white and they were worn in the same manner. There was no tilting, no suggestiveness of jauntiness, no yielding to "ensemble" to conform to colors or fittings of other bodily adornment. They fitted the head closely and in exactly the same manner, exposing the full face and part of the hair which was parted in the middle and tucked back inside the cap and above or beside the ears. A pair of white ribbons at the lower front tied in a neat bow at the throat. The effect was like a perfectly designed frame upon a cherished picture.

Variety was in the comparatively subordinate item of adornment in the "trimmings." Some were edged with lace which hung loosely, some with lace which was starched. Some were edged with starched and fluted linen of varied width and depth. Some had lace or linen, loose or starched crossing the forehead, some only at the sides of the face. Some had a smaller adornment running at the lower sides of the cap and around the back of the neck. Some had not this latter ruching.

Unquestionably these little variations followed some rule written in nature and not in fashion books and took account of the individual face and its expression. The arbiter of its make-up was the dear old lady herself. Her daughter, her husband, even her father, if he were living, had no rights of suggestion or of criticism to which she gave the slightest respect. Her mother, if she were living, had better standing as counsellor. By whatever ultimate authority, the final effect of the cap which was the invariable head-dress of the immigrant grandmother was the most dignified and beautiful bodily adornment that ever graced the matronly face and form. It added sweetness to Grandmother's kisses, softness to her admonitions, sharpness to her imprecations. And so often did she seem liberal with all these.

This Saturday evening custom and Christmas Eve ritual, ironing Grandmother's cap, began with the heating of the cap-iron. This was an old linch-pin which is still preserved by a member of our family. Whether it was originally a part of an axletree in some equipage in the ox-cart age as it seemed by appearance, or what else may have been its purpose before Grandfather rescued it from its humble destiny to raise it to the veneration attaching to its service in giving form to the divine frills of Grandmother's cap for many years, is lost to memory. It was some more than a foot in length, its one end rounded well by its maker's hammer and anvil to something near the shape of an acorn.

After the evening meal and the tidying up of things, Grandmother would place her iron in a little pile of coals at the edge of the grate. When it had absorbed sufficient heat the old lady would take the iron from the coals, remove every particle of matter adhering to it with a clean wet rag, then test its heat by some gift of sense which seemed mysterious in its accuracy. Never was there a sign of a scorch made by that iron.

As methodically as ever ritual was performed, she had placed a chair for Grandfather and given him the sign and the word to take his place. Before him she sat on a stool. His post was just so, elbows on knees, the iron at its cool end held carefully and firmly in both hands at an exact angle. Then began a conversation in Irish in which the old lady took that part to which Mr. Dooley in one of his happiest passages accorded credit as the highest philosophy, namely, the part of the good listener. Often, especially on Christmas Eve, the old gentleman would run off in recitation of old Celtic lore, a monologue which sometimes dipped into the classics. His repertoire included snatches from the debates of Saint Patrick with Ossian, "Usheen" as he pronounced it.

With wonderful accuracy she had measured the limp flush linen edge of the moist and starched cap into parts which fit exactly over the end of the iron. Regardless of what "Usheen" had to say, this must be held at the right altitude, angle and moment. Over it she would press each length, holding it firmly until it became dry and rigid, the next length following and so on until the circle was complete. Then the body of the cap came in for its careful stretching and shaping. If perchance Grandfather's mind followed "Usheen" to become lost for the briefest moment somewhere about the Hill of Tara, with result that the iron's angle brought it out of line to touch her bare thumb, the kindly old lady would deliver herself of a volley of Gaelic eloquence quite apart from the thread of the discourse drawn from the classics.

When the ironing, setting, stretching were done, the finish was that triumph of old-time loveliness, Grandmother's cap. Those of us who saw those dear old grandames in the quiet of their declining years, smiling down on us with eyes so expressive of affection, faces beaming with the vast sympathy of their kindly old hearts, can never forget their caps. If we saw one of them ever so rarely without her cap something seemed to be missing.

I cannot avoid some fear that the grandmothers of today who go to beauty parlors to minimize wrinkles and resort to the tricks of modern dissemblance of the truth of advancing years do so at the expense to some degree of their divinely appointed office as monitors of budding, care-free, exuberant, mischievous youth. The grandmothers of my day held and exercised powers surpassing those of the immediate parents. A youngster might go into insurrection for a moment against parental authority. He never defied his grandmother. She fascinated him by her soft persuasive words and manner. She kept a clean soft feather bed which soothed his tired limbs to restfulness and growth when he came to visit her. Abundance of tidbits was there which suited his avid taste divinely. And she always wore her immaculately clean white cap.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—The National Broadcasting Company has announced a "round the world" broadcast for Christmas Eve, beginning at 11:45 p.m. Eastern Standard Time in the little church at Oberndorf, near Salzburg, Austria, where children of the village sing "Silent Night" just as it was sung there for the first time 118 years ago. The program includes choral singing in New York, San Francisco, Buenos Aires, Hawaii, the Philippines and Japan. Christmas music over the Columbia Broadcasting System includes the Palestrina Choir directed by Nicola Montani from Philadelphia. * * * The Ladies of Isabella in Chicago have undertaken a Christmas cheer entertainment program reaching 16,000 persons—orphans, the aged, war veterans and the underprivileged—in their vicinity. * * * At St. Louis the Third Order of St. Francis has launched a campaign to "Keep Christ in Christmas." According to "Crib Devotions," a booklet issued at the Third Order Headquarters at 3200 Meramec Street, "The custom of erecting a crib on Christmas began with Saint Francis, who in 1223 assembled the faithful at Greccio to celebrate the nativity of our Saviour in a manner till then unknown. He prepared the manger at Bethlehem, with an ox and an ass and all the usual fittings of a stable, and with the Virgin Mother and Saint Joseph guarding the God-Man. On the eve of the Nativity holy Mass was celebrated over this first crib." * * * The seventeenth annual meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association will be held at Providence, R. I., December 28-31. The twelfth annual meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association takes place at Chicago, December 29 and 30. * * * From December 16 to 24, station CHRC carried a retreat for shut-ins in preparation for Christmas with sermons by the Reverend Guillaume Dechénes, professor of philosophy at the Seminary in Quebec, Canada.

The Nation.—The final election returns gave Roosevelt 27,752,309; Landon, 16,682,524; Lemke (Union), 892,793; Thomas (Socialist), 187,342; Browder (Communist), 80,096; Colvin (Prohibitionist), 37,609; Aiken (Socialist-Labor), 12,793; scattering and void, 168,911. * * * The strike wave increased, with labor troubles growing to the position of chief threat to immediate increased economic prosperity. Rumors of an approaching settlement of the ship strike on the Pacific were not confirmed. The hiring halls question still blocked agreement. Harry Bridges, president of the San Francisco division of the International Longshoremen's Association, who led in the formation of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific in 1934, came to New York on strike business, particularly to persuade the longshoremen on the Atlantic to join with the rest in this strike. He also feels that a national federation of all labor connected with the sea is necessary. In Chester, Pa., a fight following an attempt of workers to get through a picket line to the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Company led to the death of one man, the serious injury of four, and lesser injury of 100. The flat glass industry is almost completely tied up in strikes, walk-outs and sit-downs. There are rumbles in the coal industry. Soft coal owners are asking for a rise in hours worked from 25 to 40, with no increase in pay. The workers want a lowering in work time to 30 hours with an increase in pay. * * * Secretary of War Woodring explained some of the features of the super-mobilization plan to be submitted to Congress. It includes: "Power for the President to draft into service industrial management personnel. Price-fixing of war materials and commodities. Regulation of commodity exchanges. Authority for the Chief Executive, in his discretion, to close securities and stock exchanges for the duration of the emergency." * * * The Council for Industrial Progress, organized with difficulty by Federal Coordinator for Industrial Cooperation Berry, on December 11 issued a three-point program for industry. It embodied a revised NRA set-up favorable to the "little man"; amendments to the anti-trust laws making them more effective; a system of government-guaranteed loans to small business similar to FHA loans to home owners.

The Wide World.—On December 10, King Edward VIII formally renounced the British crown, and his brother, the Duke of York, succeeded as King George VI. Events leading up to this epochal event are described below. * * * The Council of the League of Nations met to consider the Spanish situation, and learned that agents of foreign powers, notably Russia and Germany, had been active in the civil war despite the non-intervention pact. There was marked anxiety in Geneva lest the discussions lead to an open breach between the powers involved. An Anglo-French communiqué suggesting that parties to the conflict be invited to sign a truce following a plea by other European powers was accepted with reservations by Italy and Germany, while Portugal refused to accede. The League itself voted to recognize the Leftist government. Military activities in Spain had apparently entered a "winter phase," with General Franco attempting to blockade Catalonian ports and thus cause a shortage of supplies. * * * Reports that German grain crops were considerably below expectations were carried by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. It was believed that heavy imports of wheat and rye would be required. General Goering issued sharp warnings to peasants against hoarding foodstuffs or feeding "valuable grain" to animals. A dispatch indicated also that farmers in northwestern Germany had agreed to comply with the order only on condition that crucifixes be restored to schools from which they had been removed. It was likewise stated that among the Nazi officials known to have sundered their relations with a church was Joachim von Ribbentrop. Recently, Protestant and Catholic defections have been numerous. * * * Observers of the situation in Asia were startled on December 13 by the

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news that General Chiang Kai-Shek, vigorous commander-in-chief of Nanking government forces, had been seized by mutineers in the Shensi province, command of which is lodged with Marshal Chang Hsueh-Liang. The captors are said to have demanded a ransom in the shape of a promise that war would be declared on Japan with a view toward regaining Manchukuo. Recognition of Communism was likewise insisted upon. The safety of the generalissimo was questionable, although Nanking seemed to fear the possible outbreak of a civil war more than anything else. * * * Chur, Switzerland, was the scene of a sensational trial at which David Frankfurter, Jewish student, faced a possible sentence of eighteen years in prison for the murder of Wilhelm Gustloff, Nazi organizer, on Swiss soil. He was found guilty. The case riveted attention upon Nazi activities in the German-speaking cantons and upon the tact and energy required of the government in opposing them. * * * Major Emil Fey won a libel suit in Vienna against a paper which had accused him of implication in the murder of Dr. Dollfuss.

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The Abdication of King Edward.—After days of tense waiting and wrangling, Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin informed the House of Commons that King Edward VIII had decided to abdicate. Mr. Baldwin spoke with quite paternal kindliness, and evoked practically no opposition. Almost immediately thereafter the formal papers of abdication were signed, and it was announced that Albert, Duke of York, would ascend the throne as George VI. Assent to these unprecedented moves was received from the Dominions, though Ireland used the opportunity to abolish the office of Governor General. Known now as "David Windsor," the former king addressed the world over the radio, declared that he preferred love to sovereignty, hoped that his decision would be understood, and pledged his services to England. Simultaneously a long line of British commentators swung into action, notable articles being received in this country from such men as Hugh Walpole and Wickham Steed. As soon as George VI had been proclaimed King, he created his brother Duke of Windsor. Meanwhile the ex-monarch sped by automobile, boat and train to Austria, where he was given hospitality in a fine old Rothschild castle. Mrs. Simpson, whose name had suddenly become as well known as that of Helen of Troy, remained in seclusion at the home of friends resident in France. The Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking for the Church of England, deplored the fate of the young King and placed much of the blame upon a "set" noted for indulgences not in consonance with the sober traditions of the English people. His remarks occasioned some resentment. Only Mr. Bernard Shaw was recalcitrant, as this most astounding episode was written into history. Predictions were that the coronation would take place on the day previously appointed. Merchants were considerably distraught, since all souvenir merchandise marked Edward would have to be relabeled George. But on the whole the ecitement subsided with quite remarkable rapidity, and it hardly seemed that anythink like irreparable damage had been done to the Crown.

Pan-American Peace Pact.—Coinciding to the day with President Roosevelt's return to United States soil, a Pan-American neutrality convention was agreed upon in committee by delegates of all twenty-one nations, December 15. Except for a few minor reservations, the most important of which was Argentina's insistence that "foodstuffs or raw materials destined to civilian populations of belligerent nations" and the credit needed for their acquisition can in no way be considered contraband, the terms were agreed to by all the delegates. In its revised form the treaty differs little from that proposed by Secretary Hull, December 12. To meet the wishes of Argentina, clauses have been added to the effect that nothing in this convention shall interfere with the obligations contracted by the American nations as members of the League of Nations, but even this principle was held to be implicit in the terms proposed by the United States delegates. Latin-American nations found of prime importance the protocol explicitly defining intervention as a threat to peace. The new pact designates and outlines the Gondra treaty, the pact of Paris, the inter-American conciliation convention, the inter-American arbitration treaty and the Argentine anti-war pact as the five obligations specifically reaffirmed as instruments of arbitration. It calls for consultation of all the signatories on matters affecting peace in this hemisphere, with offers of mediation and good offices in accordance with the five afore-mentioned pacts. In case a "threat of war" is recognized by the signatories they agree to consult and, during the period of consultation and for "not more than six months," the signatories agree to refrain from military action or other form of hostilities. Provisions for the settlement of disputes between two or more American nations do not apply to questions that have already been submitted to various bodies for arbitration. (This applies to the controversial Chaco dispute.) If pacific settlement should fail, the signatories are to adopt a common policy as neutrals as provided for in the Argentine anti-war pact. In the case of war outside the Americas the signatories would confer in order to achieve a common neutrality policy, but the pact does not go beyond recommending such measures as arms embargos and prohibition of credits to be taken against belligerents.

Manufacturers Meet.—The forty-first annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers expressed itself in more cooperative language than any such meeting held in several years. The most renowned enemies of all New Dealism led with disconcerting sweetness the chorus of "good feeling." In closing, the convention adopted a "Declaration of Principles for American Industry" which restated the laissez-faire point of view in the best terms found in years: "We believe that the greatest future progress is possible under a competitive private enterprise, profit and loss system, which permits reward to the individual in proportion to his achievements and the risks incurred. . . . Ours is a society of interdependent and cooperating groups of widely differing economic activities. The manufacturer tends to prosper when the farmer prospers. . . . There shall be no artificial barriers to the equality of opportunity for the individual to pro-

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gress from one economic level to another; there shall be no fixed rigidities which will prevent the small plant of today from becoming the industrial leader of tomorrow, and individual initiative shall not lose the impetus and inspiration that has brought our people to their high standard of living. We oppose any monopoly in production, distribution or labor which restricts or stifles competition and which imposes a burden of unfair high prices on the consumer. A well-informed public should differentiate between mere size and monopoly. . . . The true function of proper government, as declared by the founders of the American system, is to protect the individual in the exercise of his rights. When this is done, economic and social progress is assured through individual initiative, responsibility and advancement. Government competition with private industry is injurious and unsound. We believe in and support the right of labor to seek, secure and retain employment without regard to membership or non-membership in any organization and to bargain, without interference or coercion by anyone, either collectively or individually. We believe in the correlative right of the employer to be free from coercion by anyone." Child labor and stock market manipulation are condemned. Social security, peace and reciprocal tariffs praised. "Industry seeks an era of good feeling."

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—At the close of the National Preaching Mission at Madison Square Garden, New York, December 7, Dr. E. Stanley Jones of India called for a united "Church of Christ in America" which would embrace all Protestant denominations. Each denomination would continue to have local government and be considered a branch of the united Church. At the Biennial Meeting of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, at Asbury Park, N. J., December 9-11, the "most distinctive feature" was the emphasis on "the necessity of the unity of all Christians," according to the News Service of the National Conference of Jews and Christians. * * * In the past fifty-five years the Church Army, Episcopal lay organization, has trained 6,000 laymen for church work, 600 of whom became ministers. It operates more than 80 hospitals, reformatories, trade schools, farms and other institutions in England, the West Indies, Australia, Canada, China, Japan, New Zealand, Hawaii and the United States. After the World War it erected 500 houses in England providing for 4,000 people. Its work includes helping the poor, visiting the prisons and assisting the needy generally. * * * At the recent Northern Baptist Youth Conference at Albany, N. Y., a report was adopted calling for an extensive program of temperance education in public schools. Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian congregations in Virginia are contributing funds for the placing of 4,000 temperance posters in church schools and other religious centers throughout the state, January 17, the Sunday before General Robert E. Lee's birthday. General Lee will be quoted to the effect that "while moderation and temperance in all things are commendable and beneficial, abstinence from spiritous liquors is the best safeguard to morals and health." The Federal Council of Churches cited Department of Internal Revenue statistics that 449,000,000 gallons of distilled liquor had been produced in the United States this year in comparison with 181,000,000 gallons in 1914.

Radio and the Public.—The conference of organizations interested in the progress of broadcasting which met in Washington recently gathered many who had devoted a great deal of thought to the problem. No one can overestimate the value of the quiet, efficient work done over a number of years by such bodies as the National Council on Radio in Education. Perhaps the major conclusion was stated almost in advance by Mr. Anning S. Prall, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, who said that Americans would be quite sure to resent the tax and the control incidental to such systems as the British. This implies a great deal of freedom, which educational forces must know how to use. "Any educational program on the air would be but a hollow thing if it were not fundamental in that those participating in the program were free at all times to seek the truth, wherever it might be found, and having found it, to proclaim it," declared Secretary Ickes. He confessed, however, that hunting for it on the air involved a very considerable amount of boredom. Representatives of other lands, who addressed the conference, thought that the quality of their broadcasts compensated to some extent for the glamor and lavishness of many American commercial programs. In so far as one can estimate from published reports, the temper of the educators in attendance was modest. They insisted upon the importance of the microphone as an intellectual instrument, but felt that many technical problems still awaited solution. The published reports of this conference should be of great interest and value.

A Bishop and Gambling.—Some games of chance have been quite generally sanctioned as appropriate to entertainments designed to raise money for church purposes. As a rule the sport has been relatively innocent, since everyone understood that the ultimate object was to benefit a parish or institution. But abuses have crept in. A decree by the Most Reverend Edmund F. Gibbons therefore bans the game of bingo on church property in the Diocese of Albany. "The game of bingo in this diocese has ceased to be a harmless pastime," says the decree. "Whatever financial profits it may yield and whatever may be said in extenuation of it as a diversion, it cannot escape severe censure as outright gambling on a large scale. It is growing daily. The stakes are mounting higher and the gambling fever is rising with them. So far as the Catholic churches and institutions in the Diocese of Albany are concerned, this condition of affairs can be tolerated no longer. It is scandalizing, distasteful and contemptuous of religion." It may be added that bingo doubtless owes its popularity to usefulness as a means of entertaining large crowds. Cards such as those used in the ancient pastime of lotto are distributed, together with a number of grains of corn, to as many as wish to play. The banker draws numbers from a hat and calls them out. The player who first fills in a row of numbers wins a prize.

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In most communities these prizes are solicited from shopkeepers and range from the kind of china nobody would care to have around to baskets of groceries. More recently, however, the winner has played for money.

Blackfriars *Discusses Peace.*—The editor introduces the December issue of *Blackfriars,* English monthly review, with some Thomistic observations on peace in general. He holds that "peace is no other thing than the union of all desire. But divine love alone is great enough to engage all a man's desires, and divine love is God. The search for peace will end and will begin in the realization of the Incarnation not as past event but as present fact." He further says, "A transient concord, a sudden tension of opposing aims, may come to us through self-interest, peace can only be the by-product of love." Father Vincent McNabb, O. P., contributes a "Meditation on Peace" and cites a saying of Saint Thomas to the effect that "peace flies when each one seeks his own rights." He then proceeds, "The Church, of course, in its defense might justifiably use the sword. When Peter used it the only result was to cut off the hearing ear. You couldn't expect the Gospel to be heard by a man whose ear you had cut off. Even when the sword is used quite rightfully in defense of the Church, I presume it is the end of all apologetics." In discussing the "Ethics of Modern War," Father Gerald Vann, O. P., quotes Pius XI as follows: "Any nation so mad as to contemplate war would be guilty of monstrous homicide and almost certainly of suicide." One of Father Vann's strongest arguments that practically speaking a just war is not possible today is that actual warfare is now directed consciously and purposely against defenseless civil populations; "in other words it directly contemplates mass murder." In view of all the consequences in modern war Father Vann deems it "unthinkable" that war today could fulfil the Thomistic requirement of a right intention, "namely that good be promoted and evil avoided," and concludes that in the concrete a just war is impossible and "the resort to warfare immoral." In other articles Father Edward Quinn reviews modern international relations from a Catholic viewpoint, while John Eppstein, Bernard Alexander and Don Luigi Sturzo deal with specific peace policies of our day.

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Relief.—On December 5, the CPA payroll numbered 2,284,202, a decrease of 198,750 since November 7. The present appropriation of the WPA will run out during January, the drought having cost an unexpected $300,000,000 in relief money. How the November cut was effected has not been published. Some were drought cases transferred to the RA. It is estimated that 5,000 were administrative employees, 20,000 non-relief employees hired on merit, not need (bosses, specialists, etc.), and 150,000 persons found to have other resources. All reductions were made in the teeth of local opposition, the United States Conference of Mayors leading the fight. After conferring with Administrator Hopkins, Mayor La Guardia, president of the conference, said: "When there is a difference of opinion between the local federal administrator and the worker [as to whether he needs the relief job or not], an investigation will be made by the local relief agency and, if found in need, certification is made to the federal administrator. The Conference of Mayors understands perfectly that additional funds for the balance of the fiscal year will have to be provided by Congress immediately upon convening." In New York City, local Administrator Somervell tried to cut the 10,000 artists, actors, musicians and writers by 19 percent. Protest and demonstrations were vigorous, 3,000 parading with signs on their backs: "Merry Christmas! Wish you well. Here's your pink slip—Somervell." About 1,000 of the dismissed were reinstated. During the week, the WPA announced some of its achievements. It has had 34,440 teachers giving 1,324,144 persons instruction, more than the colleges and universities take care of. It has built 26,000 miles of highway, roads and streets; completed 1,141 grade and secondary schools; 179 hospitals; 2,263 miles of sewer; 63 air fields and 659 parks and playgrounds. This is only a partial list of the projects undertaken in over 5,000 communities.

CCC Report.—Robert Fechner, director, submitted his annual report of the most popular New Deal development, the Civilian Conservation Corps. Enrolment moved from a low of 241,810 on March 31, 1935, to a peak of 505,782 as of August 31, 1935, and back to the steady figure of 350,000 on July 1, 1936. CCC financial obligations for the fiscal year totaled about $492,000,000, of which $154,000,000 was paid as cash allowances to enrollees, who passed on to their families about $123,000,000. "The young man who served in the CCC in the fiscal year 1936 was afforded greater opportunities to improve himself than had been afforded in prior years. The educational opportunities, through the educational program, were greater. Practical instruction on the job was more extensive and more skilfully presented. The variety and complexity of the jobs performed increased as the increased technical abilities of enrollees made this possible. . . . It is encouraging to note that during the past fiscal year an average of about 12,000 boys per month have left the camps to accept employment. Many of the employment opportunities open to enrollees would not have been open to them prior to their training and service in the CCC. The increased employability of the CCC boy depends not solely upon his increased skill, but also upon his general living habits, his mental outlook and his physical condition. . . . To stop now would unquestionably throw out of gear the long-needed conservation movement and would leave incomplete a broad program which stands not only for conservation and recreation but for adequate protection and proper development of public areas." Mr. Fechner believes "there is a broad field of operation for a permanent Civilian Conservation Corps." When removed from the emergency category, he would want all positions placed under the classified civil service. At present, most of the administrative work in the various camps is done by Army Reserve personnel, while civilians are used mostly in Washington.

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The Play and Screen

You Can't Take It with You

ITS STORY is negligible, its love scenes are wooden, it offers no serious contribution to social ideas or political philosophy, and yet it is by all odds the most delightful American play to be seen so far this year. It is denominated by its authors, Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, a "farcical comedy," which in terms of plot is accurate enough, but exceedingly inaccurate in the usual meaning of the term. For "You Can't Take It with You" is first and foremost a play of character, not of situation; of humor and, in the old sense, of humors, rather than of ideas or emotions. It is a play almost Dickensian in flavor, and deals with as hilarious a collection of eccentrics as ever gathered under one roof. The roof is that of Martin Vanderhof, a retired American business man. I use the term "retired" because thirty years before, Mr. Vanderhof when in the elevator on his way up to his office suddenly decided that business was a waste of time. Since that day he had amused himself by attending college commencements and other functions which he considered equally ridiculous, by refusing to pay his income tax, and by collecting about him a most extraordinary entourage. These are his daughter, who eternally writes plays because one day a typewriter was delivered by mistake at his door; his son-in-law, who makes fireworks in the cellar; his granddaughter, who has for eight years been studying ballet-dancing with a tumultuous White Russian; her husband who plays the xylophone; a former ice-man who is the son-in-law's factotum; Essie and Donald, his two Negro servants; an alcoholic actress for whom Mr. Vanderhof is writing a play; and a Russian grand duchess who is a waitress at Childs and who hopes some day to arrive at Schrafft's. The normal members of the play are Mr. Vanderhof's other granddaughter, the son of her employer with whom she is in love, her employer and his Park Avenue wife. But these normal people simply don't count. They are stencils supposed to be necessary for the plot, but as the plot doesn't count, they and the plot, in the words of the immortal Ko-Ko, never would be missed.

In this preposterous abode these people go about their hobbies, each oblivious of the others except when their hobbies interact, but all devoted to the house and to each other. With the exception of the alcoholic actress all are lovable and good. There is plenty of ego in each one's cosmos, but neither hatred nor envy nor malice. The spirit of the household is beautifully symbolized in Mr. Vanderhof's simple way of saying grace before dinner, a little touch which is only the more truly reverent because of its naif humor. The humor throughout has in it no acid; it might be said that when it is not Dickensian it is Gilbertian. And yet this would not be a just characterization. Mr. Hart and Mr. Kaufman are humorists in their own right, as American as Washington Heights, where the Vanderhof ménage probably is situated. Not since George Kelly's 'The Show-Off" has a so completely middle-class American comedy reached our boards, and while Mr. Kelly created only one character Mr. Hart and Mr. Kaufman have created a whole play-full. The American theatre owes a debt to Mr. Hart and Mr. Kaufman for showing that life does not need to be twisted to be interesting.

The production and the acting are worthy of the play. Henry Travers's Mr. Vanderhof is in its humor and simplicity truly an exquisite impersonation. Frank Conlan's Mr. De Pinna, the ex-ice-man, is equally good in its naif sincerity, and Josephine Hull as Mrs. Sycamore, Frank Wilcox as her husband, George Heller as Ed, George Tobias as the emotional Russian, Mitzi Hajos as the alcoholic actress, and Anna Lubowe as the grand duchess could not be improved on. And we mustn't forget the two dusky servants portrayed so magnificently by Paula Trueman and Oscar Polk, nor Donald Oenslager's set, nor Mr. Kaufman's direction. Margot Stevenson does what a pretty girl can do to make effective a colorless part, and she is seconded in an equally colorless part by Jess Barker. William J. Kelly and Virginia Hammond have a better opportunity as the Wall Street banker and his spouse, and make the most of that opportunity. In short, "You Can't Take It with You" is a play to be seen and seen again, one of the most amusing specimens of Americana the American theatre has produced. (At the Booth Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Three Men on a Horse

TWO YEARS of straight running, and still going, on Broadway, three companies touring the road, productions in England, Australia and Holland—and now "Three Men on a Horse" reaches the screen with all of the furious fun and exaggerated comedy portrayals of the original play by John Cecil Holm and George Abbott. Save for the judicious pruning of its broadest lines, the screen play is a verbatim transcription of the boisterous gag-line dialogue of the stage comedy, with the added advantages of photographic elaborations of highly amusing scenes which in the original appeared only in dialogue references. For one, Hollywood now employs a first-class racetrack to serve for the showdown between the three broken, small-time track touts and the Milquetoast greeting-card poet who is being played by the gamblers for his uncanny ability to pick horses that win, a pastime in which he engages just for fun—he never bets.

This hobby of the greeting-card clerk is unbelievably profitable to the awed touts until his psychic powers are pushed too far by the high-pressure gamblers, and the spell is broken. The tipster, of course, has never seen a race or a race horse in his life, until his now-frantic "patrons" virtually carried their oracle to the track to inspect the nags at first-hand. The results accruing from his reactions to the shocking spectacle of a real race horse is a mirthquake, even if extremely improbable. It is another case of where the very absurdness fires broadsides of merriment which even the most non-risible are unable to withstand.

The Legion of Decency does not approve of some of the dialogue *à la boudoir,* even though farcical, and rates the picture as "Class B—Objectionable in Part."

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Cooperstown, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In line with the letter signed "Viator," and the editorial in THE COMMONWEAL of November 27, I am encouraged to write what has long been in my mind. Is there any source of instruction for instructors of Catholic children to the end of making the saints—shall we say more human, more attractive, more possible?

As a child I have a vivid recollection of my secret and guilty revulsion toward the word "saint." I loved Our Lord, and His Mother, and His Church, but for those pallid ones, with bowed head and folded hands, who never answered back, never fought, never had any fun, and never did anything like the rest of us, I had only dislike and distrust. And I early determined never to be a "saint."

I was a normal, robust, strong, ardent little girl, with a great love of combat and adventure, and reckless throwing of my small self into whatever came along, if it was worlds to conquer—all the better. We had to read the Lives of the Saints, hounded thereunto by the convert grandmother who brought us up. And that great army of what seemed to us mysterious kill-joys was a stumbling block and nourisher of rebellion. It took maturity and knowledge and experience to make me realize, and love the saints. So when a child in my own class said to me, "But I don't want to be a saint, I don't like them, I'm afraid of them," it struck a familiar echo in my heart.

And the prayers in our prayer-books, telling God that we wanted nothing but Himself, nothing at all. I was an honest child, too, and I knew and I knew God knew, that with my whole soul I wanted to go to Europe, and to have some new skates, and curly hair, and after a while, perhaps, have some prince come along and notice me, and dozens of other earthly things. I read the prayers because I had to, but I used to add to God that it wasn't true, and that I did want other things beside Himself. I wish the amateur teacher could be able to spread the atmosphere which I think one feels in the play "Green Pastures," making goodness so lovely that that is what a child would rather be. Pardon me if I have taken too much of your time with this, but I do feel strongly about it, the loveliness of just plain goodness, and making children see it while they are still good.

ELIZABETH PATTERSON.

PAX ROMANA

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In his timely article on "Pax Romana," the International Federation of Catholic Students, Dr. Francis Aylward remarks, in passing, that Father T. Lawrason Riggs was probably the first American priest to attend a Pax Romana meeting. In 1921, at the very first meeting, there was present, among other American students of the Fribourg University, Reverend A. J. Muench of the Milwaukee Archdiocese, who took a very active part in Pax Romana's foundation. I mention this fact because American Catholic Student Federations might seek episcopal guidance for future contact with Pax Romana, and find it in the Most Reverend A. J. Muench, Bishop of Fargo, North Dakota.

C. F. F.

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: I was very interested to read in your issue of November 27 the article by Dr. Aylward on "Pax Romana." I feel that this is a movement which must be almost unknown to most American Catholics, and yet one deserving of our cordial sympathy and full support.

There are in this country a large number of societies of Catholic students and alumni, and it is to be hoped that these will endeavor to send representatives to future congresses. Might I suggest as a practical step that representatives of organizations interested form a "Pax Romana" committee with the view to arranging for an American group to attend the Parisian Congress next July.

JAMES MURPHY.

APPRECIATION

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: I have your very appreciative letter of December 3, and I am merely writing you a further word to express my appreciation of the good work that you and your associates are carrying on.

During the past year I have had to assume additional obligations that have been very burdensome and as a measure of economy I am resigning from a number of associations to which I have belonged for many years, and declining to renew subscriptions that I have made for various publications for a long time past. But in going over the list of things that I felt necessary to drop I could not bring myself to drop the five annual subscriptions that I have made to THE COMMONWEAL for the coming year, and I have increased the small contribution that I annually make to the general work of the Association.

I feel that THE COMMONWEAL is rendering such a notably fine service to the American public in general, as well as to the Catholic Church, that as Catholics we have a right to be proud of it.

It has been a matter of deep concern to me, and a source of very real regret that my Catholic brethren have not shown their appreciation of it in the way of subscriptions that I think you have every right to expect.

A CALVERT ASSOCIATE.

SENTIMENTAL ATHEISTS

Pittsfield, Mass.

TO the Editor: Peter Whiffin, in the columns of your admirable journal of civilization, asks what right reporters and newshawks generally have to sit in judgment upon weighty questions like life, death and that vast forever, as much as to say that field is no place for them to browse. But what of the members of the craft who have made a lifelong study of the religions and of theological and ecclesiastical interpretations, and agree substantially with him! Are they, too, the very food of scorn? I write as one who comes not to scoff, but to pray.

JOSEPH HOLLISTER.

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Books

"Quadragesimo Anno"

Reorganization of Social Economy: The Social Encyclical Developed and Explained, by Oswald Von Nell-Breuning, S. J.; English edition prepared by Bernard W. Dempsey, S. J. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company. $3.50.

ALL THOSE who have read in whole or in part "Die Soziale Enzyclika," by Reverend Oswald Von Nell-Breuning, S.J., will heartily welcome this translation. It is valuable and desirable for two reasons: first, because the German in the original is not the easiest kind of reading; second, because the translation is exceptionally well done. It is faithful to the original and it makes good English. Father Dempsey is entitled to warm congratulations on this achievement and he deserves the sincere gratitude of all English-speaking persons who are seeking a deeper understanding of the encyclical, "On Reconstructing the Social Order."

Father Nell-Breuning's work is at once the most comprehensive and the most enlightening commentary on this great encyclical that has appeared up to the present. It is fundamental in its discussion of the particular doctrines and it provides a vast amount of information on collateral topics in the fields of economics, sociology, ethics and politics. It endeavors to answer every reasonable question that can be asked concerning the meaning of the text and the relations of its parts to one another.

There are scores of passages in the encyclical upon which a reviewer might be tempted to present Nell-Breuning's comments. Only one will be cited here. It is the one which Father Coughlin quoted, repeated and reiterated in his futile effort to show that the Pope regards concentration of money and credit as the main cause of our economic ills: "This power [economic domination] becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment," etc. According to Nell-Breuning: "This is probably the sharpest passage in the entire encyclical. Nevertheless, there should be no attempt to misconstrue it. The passage does not contain any accusations directed against human beings, and makes no statement concerning the use of the power, good or bad, by those who have it." He might have added that the Pope does not say to what extent this monopoly power is actually held in any country. The Holy Father is describing evil possibilities.

The volume before us presents not only an excellent translation, but an admirable arrangement of contents. There are eighteen chapters, each of which deals with a distinct section of the encyclical. At the beginning of each chapter are printed that part of the text with which the chapter deals and a half a dozen or more questions on the text. Within each chapter are numerous subheadings specifically related to the paragraphs of the encyclical which are under discussion. Some of these subheadings occur in the text of the encyclical itself and others are added for the convenience of the reader. Father

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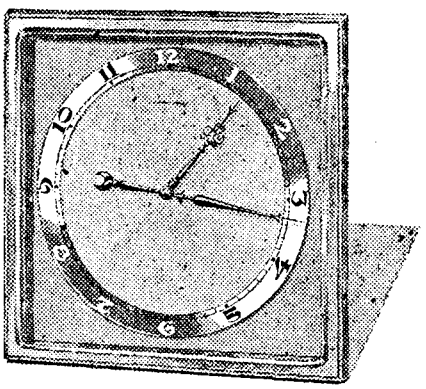

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Next Week

A STRANGE REFLECTION, by Paluel J. Flagg, concerns several kinds of virtue, expressed wonderfully well in two real lives. It also shows an instance of the world getting its values remarkably right and evidencing extraordinarily high ideals in, perhaps, a rather heedless manner. Dr. Flagg's strange reflection is a very beautiful one. . . . MANY AMERICAN WIVES, proves Stella Smart, deserve a different treatment than they receive. In money matters husbands are apt to cling to cave man ideas, keeping their spouses securely in the class of "adult dependents." Mrs. Smart believes this is wrong, and after reading this paper on family finance, very few could deny it. . . . REACTION AND THE CHURCH, by E. Harold Smith, attacks the greatest scandal on earth. "For many years now the Catholic Church has been the last refuge of the misguided followers of weak monarchs and of those keeping watch at the death-bed of dying social systems. To the poor and the workers in these countries the Church has come to be regarded as a vested interest, her bishops landed grandees, and her work to minister to the spiritual needs of those who, because they have the means to support her, have also the means to control her." The thesis of this lament and correction is "that if Catholics are unprogressive, it is in spite of the teachings of their Church and not because of them." . . . YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOOKS, by Mary R. Walsh, calls to mind the enormous impress of books on children; tells what disastrously meager fare Catholic children are offered for their reading; and suggests a definite means to remedy the situation. "The first step is a recognition of the need on the part of parents and teachers, the next is the purchase of the suitable books now in print." Then more books that are right will be written and published.

Dempsey's volume is something more than a translation of Nell-Breuning's work, inasmuch as it presents at the end the full English text of both "Rerum Novarum" and "Quadragesimo Anno," preceded in each case by an analytical outline.

JOHN A. RYAN.

Pascal and Port Royal

Pascal—The Life of Genius, by Morris Bishop. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. $3.50.

MR. BISHOP offers a picturesque account, supplied with notes and illustrations, of the life and achievement of Blaise Pascal. The home and other early influences that molded the precocious child, the formative experiences with the *Académie libre*, the engrossing intellectual adventures with keen-witted contemporaries, and the subtle attachments that knit Pascal and his sisters to the Port Royal community, all are woven into a vivid story of the man who stirred his age and showed it more truly than Harvey did its heart.

Now, this book is commended by its publishers to the "modern reader," who presumably is unacquainted with the true significance of Pascal. It is only fair to warn the modern reader that Mr. Bishop has not entirely escaped the pitfalls dug by his nineteenth-century predecessors. His history, for instance, is Port Royalist and rather less than impartial; and his contempt for scholasticism is something more than Gothic. One regrets the complacency attributed to the reader by such a passage as the smug apology an page 46, and is compelled by candor to contradict the assumption made by the author that the scientist today is a wholly disinterested and selfless fellow who spurns the uses of publicity. My meaning is, that the modern reader would like Pascal without apologies.

In effect, the modern reader is engaged by this book through the emphasis it places on the "career" and on dramatically contrasted facets of the enigmatic personality of its subject. His fundamental character is that of an experimental natural scientist in Mr. Bishop's view, and from this aspect Pascal is presented most persuasively. He is exhibited as a youth who was a strikingly original mathematician and as a young man who proved his notable gifts as a physicist, mechanist and inventor. I think that Mr. Bishop is successful in engaging his reader's interest in this side of Pascal's achievement, and I hope that thereby he will lead a good many to a desire for a deeper personal acquaintance with Pascal's works, particularly the "Pensées."

For Pascal, as Mr. Bishop takes pains to show, was not only (or I should say not simply) a mathematician and physicist: he was and is preeminently a religious philosopher. The successful interpretation of Pascal should show convincingly the psychological relation of the two aspects of Pascal's work in its very inception, and I do not find the account of this psychological relation by Mr. Bishop a very clear one. Such facts as are brought out in the book do not supply a convincing picture. Did Pascal, for example, effect a practical separation of his mind at work into two compartments, confining the interpretation of

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"scientific" experience to one and of "religious" experience to the other? Did he consider religion to be irrational but emotionally valid, or rational and emotionally valid? How did he "know" in religion and in science, and what did he mean by "knowing"? These are a few of the questions that the modern reader is apt to ask of any book about Pascal. Their answers, clearly related to the context of that remarkable man's life, are pregnant with Pascal's significance to our times.

ANDREW CORRY.

Sublimity, Simplicity, Satire

Song for a Listener, by Leonard Feeney, S.J. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

FATHER FEENEY'S title, "Song for a Listener," is elusive and yet, how accurate! There is sound which is silence because it has no meaning. There is a silence which sings because it is meaningful. Saint John of the Cross speaks of a *música callada,* a silent music. It takes a good listener to hear it and it will take a good listener to catch the full meaning of Father Feeney's song. Its melody beats somewhere beyond the rise and fall of sound-waves. It is rich, concentrated thought which in the infinitely subtle alchemy of laughter and love has been transmuted into beauty. "Elected silence sing to me."

Would that all might bite ravenously into the rich substance of these stanzas. Crisp, kindly satires compressed into little compact verses hard and clear as the glistening crystal pellets children love to play with. Intuitions, broad as the breeze, packed into the tiny clarity of a diamond.

There is a timeless part to this poem and a part which is firmly anchored to space and time. Which time? Our time. Which space? This space. This great, big, beautiful, beastly city of New York. Not that Boston, Baltimore or Chicago need feel excluded.

It is the living, ceaseless stream of Broadway. The bruised hearts, the lacquered bosoms, the rubbish mixed with faint desires, the rowdy jazz-bands, the soldered selves, the barren urges of an incommunicable clay, the hands aflame with the blaze of cheap diamonds—all that hopeless fake and humbug of modern life. I say modern life. But is all this so modern? About as modern, I suppose, as breathing, scratching oneself or eating.

And the motley procession goes on and on. The lanky lads and skinny lasses crowding into the schools, not indeed in search of truth but of flunks or passes; poor men starving for lack of food whilst rich men starve to reduce their portly paunches; the exodus from the farm to the city, leaving a scarecrow to rule where healthy, hardy men used to be kings; the gay harmonica; the barefoot boys who whistle well while Miss Tupper or Miss Margaret Sanger or whoever it may be goes about killing motherhood in order to glorify smotherhood.

It is a depressing sight, a cruel sight. And the poet breaks into the Memorare:

> "Remember, gracious Virgin Mary,
> Mother and Maiden, quite contrary,
> Of this wild welter to be wary."

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And then over the weltering sickly stream of shabbiness and sham, dawns the eternal vision of the real:

"There is a Holy House of Bread
Where friends may feast and foes are fed
And none is starved, none surfeited,

"Where souls can relish the ideal
And bodies revel in the real
Where mind and mouth can make a meal,

"Where simpletons who suck their thumbs
Can share the carvings and the crumbs
With Constantines and Chrysostoms."

It is the epic of the Eucharist, the epic of childhood and innocence, of purity and material weakness and spiritual strength, all aglow with the kindly light of delightful humor. It is the poem of the School Sisters of America, of the parochial schools and the sublime simplicity of genuine Catholic life.

What a contrast between this picture and that drawn by Martinez Sierra in his sickly "Cradle Song." Father Feeney's, an ode to virginity. Sierra's, a libel against virginity. The former a sentimental orgy of suppressed sexuality. The latter a real lovely analysis of the world's greatest institution: spiritual motherhood.

I don't suppose that Columbia Teachers' College would approve of Father Feeney's pedagogics. Columbia pedagogy has no use for infinity and Father Feeney would nourish boys on a steady diet of the Infinite. In verses which equal or even surpass the best of Chesterton's, he writes:

"I took for granted at my side
A friendly lady kindly-eyed,
Another's daughter, sister, bride.

"Two simple sounds, both sound the same,
Easy to mumble and exclaim
Seemed to suffice her for a name.

"And numbers, numbers: One and Three,
She kept on whispering to me
Until I learned a Mystery."

The poem closes with a synthesis of Father Feeney's theory of beauty. It is the age-old terrible truism that all reality is the reflection of the God's own beauty and in a sense of Christ's, because Christ is God's own ideal. It is the root-thought of spiritualism, the very soul of mysticism and the very origin of that humanism, that universal sympathy which had its best exponent in Saint Francis of Assisi. It is the explanation of much in art that would otherwise be unintelligible. Why should Van Gogh paint ugly, kindly faces? Why should Murillo take an interest in ragged little ruffians sprawling on the ground as they gamble or relish with hungry eyes a handful of grapes? Why is Gerard Manley Hopkins in love with dappled things, with the bugle boy, with Felix Randal the brawny

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farrier, with Tom the navvy and with the hard hurdle arms of Harry Ploughman?

Father Feeney has the answer:

"When once the heart has been uphurled
And glimpsed this glory in the world
Whatever's ringleted or curled

"Takes on a newer, nobler guise,
Usurps the function of surprise,
Asserts a symbol in the eyes

"Which one is soon intrigued to trace
In the most worn and wrinkled face,
In the most mean, improper place."

JAIME CASTIELLO.

Made by Time

Abinger Harvest, by E. M. Forster. New York. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

THE AUTHOR of this volume is not only a novelist but an essayist of parts who possesses charm and humor and declines to take himself too seriously. He ranges over a wide area, grouping his essays under "The Present," "The Past," "Books," "The East" and "The Abinger Pageant," Abinger being a village in Surrey with which his relatives have been connected for nearly sixty years. The lesson of this last group is touched with pathos: Shall Surrey become houses, roads, petrol pumps and pylons or shall it remain the country, green and eternal? "You can make a town, you can make a desert, you can even make a garden; but you can never, never make the country, because it was made by time."

As a critic Mr. Forster is uneven: his study of Proust is unsatisfying, of T. S. Eliot inadequate, but that of Sinclair Lewis is keen. He is at his best, not unnaturally, in picturing men: the passionate, handsome and reckless Wilfrid Blunt, poet, diplomat and diarist; Voltaire and his mistress, Mme. du Châlet, who gave up acting, dancing and games in order to do experiments and, perhaps, realize her hope of discovering the nature of the universe; Trooper Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke who bolted from Cambridge to enlist in the King's Light Dragoons, proved so incompetent with his horse that "it was withdrawn from beneath him permanently," and who was finally extricated and sent back to the university, only to leave again, this time never to return. Three years later he wrote "The Ancient Mariner." With similar insight and humor Mr. Forster presents in "The Abbey's Difficulties" the problems that beset the guardian of four troublesome children the eldest of whom proved especially inefficient, contracting consumption and finally dying far from home. Whereupon Mr. Abbey wrote thus to a certain publisher: "Sir: I beg pardon for not replying to your favor of the 30th ult. respecting the late Mr. Jno. Keats. I am obliged by your note, but he having withdrawn himself from my controul, and acted contrary to my advice, I cannot interfere with his affairs."

This is an immensely worth-while book by a sane, sensitive and delightful writer.

JOSEPH J. REILLY.

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A Mysterious One

Canary, by Gustav Eckstein. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

DR. ECKSTEIN is a physiologist who has previously ventured away from vocational duties to write "Noguchi," "Hokusai," "Kettle" and "Lives"; this time he offers the popular history of several families of canaries. He is not writing primarily for a scientific public, although Mendelians will appreciate Eckstein's novelties on the "personalities" of his pets. It is for the larger public of unprofessional bird-lovers that the book is written, and they should enjoy its lively information about the bird who is usually a familiar stranger rather than an understood friend. I shall not spoil the surprises that Dr. Eckstein reports by telling what it is that the bird watches when you come near him, or what his mating habits are, or the other amusing and significant details in this oddly attractive book. Let the bird-lover read for himself and enjoy: for Dr. Eckstein has observed acutely enough to put most readers in his debt for a pleasant evening's account of the mysterious canary.

The Pulpit

Our Preaching, by John K. Sharp, A.M., S.T.B. Philadelphia: The Dolphin Press. $2.00.

THIS book is the most extensive and the most practical work on special homiletics in the English language. It not only presents the characteristics of the different types of sermons from a rather practical than merely theoretical viewpoint, but also the ecclesiastical laws and customs on preaching and its ceremonial. The author advocates at least an hour for Sunday Masses, in order that the all-important sermon may not be unduly shortened or entirely omitted. He also thinks that a good sermon will make people more charitable than a long money talk, otherwise charity has no background. These are but a few examples of items of interest to the laity, and there is some valuable material for lay-catechists. Although written as a textbook for seminarians, no priest or bishop will lay the volume aside without having read it with increasing interest.

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